

THE CRIMINAL  
AS A  
HUMAN BEING

GEORGE S. DOUGHERTY

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# THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

BY

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## CONTENTS

I	THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING	I
II	THE GENTLE ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING . . . . .	40
III	THE STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME	77
IV	THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE . . .	115
V	BLACKMAIL—A DIFFICULT SUBJECT	149
VI	JUNGLE FOLK—THE DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET . . . . .	186
VII	THE STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER	222
VIII	MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE .	256

8-221



# THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

## CHAPTER I

### THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

**T**HERE are few who know more people in every walk of life in New York than I do. Everywhere I go I am greeted by friends and acquaintances. On Broadway, Fifth Avenue, the Bowery, the courts, in the hotel lobbies, clubs, theaters, at the big fights, baseball and football games, on the race track, it is:

"Hello, George!" "Good morning, Chief."  
"How are you, Commissioner?" This comes from an old friend, that from a fellow clubman, and so on.

In between, somewhere, there is a quiet nod or a whispered salutation from a friend who wants me to know that he wishes me well, but is not anxious to be conspicuous.



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

This timid individual is a criminal, sometimes actively engaged in his calling, but usually "retired." Our acquaintance, ripening into friendship, may have begun years ago when we were both participants in crime—he as the offender against law, and myself as the detector and prosecutor who sent him to prison.

"Where is the basis for friendship?" you probably wonder.

It began with his discovery that I am a human being, and regard the criminal as human. This has not been a very common viewpoint among detectives, policemen or even prosecutors. "Strong arm" methods still prevail in the dealings between policemen and criminals, but gradually officers of the law are coming to see that this violence is bad police work, and defeats its own ends. My rise as an investigator has been due, not to any mysterious "sleuthing" instincts, or Sherlock Holmes deductions, but to a comprehensive study and understanding of the criminal, early recognition of the value of records in criminal matters, and to the confidence and friendship of criminals, based upon sympathetic treatment.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Let me begin at the beginning.

I was born in the anthracite coal regions of Pennsylvania at the time when the famous "Molly Maguires" were assassinating mine owners and superintendents. The Pinkerton detective agency ended this reign of terror by police methods that were entirely new in the United States at that time. James McParland, a Chicago operative who assumed the name of "James McKenna," was chosen for several necessary qualifications. He was an Irishman, a singer, a dancer, a boxer, and an expert at the popular coal-mining game of "shin kicking." Burly miners in heavy boots would kick each other's shins until one or the other was exhausted. Also, he had outwardly the "dumbness" of the immigrant, and, rigged as a greenhorn, was sent to another part of Pennsylvania and slowly worked into the Molly Maguire territory. Gaining the confidence of the insiders, he secured evidence upon which between fifteen and twenty ringleaders were hanged.

This was adventure that aroused my admiration as a boy. Two of my uncles had been in the United States Secret Service during the Civil War. One was connected with the apprehension

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

of J. Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Lincoln, the other's experience gained in the secret service led to his connection with the Pinkerton agency. My father, a trained musician, was a railroad superintendent, and at nighttime, during the worst era of the Molly Maguire reign of terror, went about the most dangerous sections teaching country choirs. Though he was warned again and again of possible danger, because this outlaw organization marked superintendents for its victims, he was unharmed.

I was one of a family of nineteen children. When the time came for me to choose an occupation, there were several things at which I might have worked right in my native town. I might have had a "white shirt" job, with a celluloid collar, and become a telegraph operator with little chance of promotion, or I could have taken a job in a machine shop, reporting to work at seven every morning and working until six every night. None of the available occupations had the element of adventure that I expected from life. Besides the excitement of the detective exploits of McParland and my uncles, I had written several

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

stories for Frank Leslie's *Weekly* and won a twenty-five-dollar prize. So I was in no frame of mind to settle down to a routine trade. My great desire was travel and adventure.

To our little town, one day, there came a phrenologist giving a performance in the town hall at which he lectured upon and read "bumps." I knew he was coming, and watched the two daily trains for him. I was right there to help him with his baggage and solicit work, distributing circulars, putting up advertising placards, and taking tickets at the door. I stuck to him until he was leaving town, winning his thanks—and that was all!

When I saw that he did not mean to pay me anything, I asked timidly: "Would you mind feeling my bumps and giving me one of your charts?"

These charts showed the human cranium divided into compartments, each denoting some special characteristic or occupation in life. I was delighted when he gave me one and marked upon it two occupations for which the science of phrenology declared I was peculiarly fitted—"Newspaper man" and "detective."



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Father was a stanch democrat, and the general trend of the town democratic, and those were times in which parties meant more than they do to-day. But there was a little paper called the *Republican* in the next town, and on this I secured a job at four dollars a week, walking seven miles to work in the morning and the same distance home at night. Father was fearful that the paper might eventually make a republican of me. On the other hand, what a foundation this was for my future career. My employer, J. Harry Zerbey, was a rugged, progressive individual, who by his teachings gave me every inspiration to succeed. He now owns and edits two flourishing dailies—the *Republican* and the *Morning Paper* at Pottsville, Pa. I learned the work of a country newspaper—printer's devil, typesetter, press feeder, cub reporter. I was circulation agent, because I sold or delivered on Saturday all the papers that were printed. What joy to work all night in the press room and "get her out in the morning." But after a time that, too, failed to supply the adventure I craved, though it was interesting and taught me a great many things that are still useful.



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

So one day along came the Barnum and Bailey Circus. It was the year they had the sacred white elephant. I "joined up" with the aggregation and got a job in the ticket wagon. In a few seasons with them I found plenty of adventure and interest traveling about the country. This also proved unsatisfactory in time; not because circus life grew stale, but it led nowhere, except that it gave me a great insight into the operations of the criminal. He was a crafty individual, and bobbed up serenely in every stand we played. Newcomers in the grafting game were frequent. The individual who always worked within the law was ubiquitous—the shell worker, the three-card monte men, O'Leary belt players, etc.—not thieves in their own estimation, but giving the victim the "gambler's chance," so to speak. Birds of a feather surely flocked together. Sometimes they were arrested, but soon bailed out and back on the job. One rubbed elbows so much with them that knowing the tribe was natural. I got so I could recognize them at a glance from their peculiar characteristics. Nearly all of them dressed the part of a crook; colored vests, checkered suits, unusual shoes and

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

hats. They actually branded themselves, like the bootleggers on Long Island, who are now so numerous that they have adopted and wear a badge of office, so they can easily recognize each other and avoid confusion. Whole troupes of the criminal gentry used to follow the red wagons. Sometimes a general manager controlled a number of "mobs," as they were called, who allotted territory, fixed coppers, hired new "tools" when necessary. He paid regular visits of inspection to determine business conditions. With my circus experience, I always figured how easy it would be to catch these vain crooks, who considered themselves many degrees smarter than their victims—and who always whined and whimpered every time some one smarter than they nailed them.

To be a detective—that was the phrenologist's second pick.

So at the age of twenty, with an experience of life, people and places not enjoyed by most boys at that age, I boldly went to New York, walked into the Pinkerton office and asked for a job.

It is not the custom of Pinkertons to hire persons who apply for employment. Not they!

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

They know all about their man before they hire him. He answers an innocently worded advertisement to a post-office box, is selected from among a number of applicants, interviewed in an out-of-the-way office building—never knowing it is Pinkerton's—is hired and works for some time before he knows in whose employ he is. I was in the Pinkerton service twenty-three years, with my position varying from operative to Superintendent of Criminal Investigation. There never was a cleaner institution in the world. They have always been the soul of honor and teach their employees accordingly. It is easy to understand why they do not and will not engage personal applicants. Their operations are so extensive they cannot permit any one to find employment and spy on their work and staff.

With me it was different. One of my uncles was an official. Another had gained a big reputation with the United States Secret Service in wartime. Besides, I was, even though but a youth, a specialist in traveling thieves. They showed me their rogues' gallery—hundreds of photographs all the same size with only numbers to identify them. I began calling them by their

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

"road monickers," coined names: "Bill the Brute," "The Postal Kid," "The Schwindler," "Windy Dick," "Gold-Tooth Kid," "Mollie Matches," "Mickey Gleason," "Dan Cherry," "Twinkler," "Albany Kid," "Owls," "Yock Hughes," and many others. I was a "find" to them, but did not realize it, so they suspended the rules and hired me. I spent several days alone reading the book of rules. I remember the pictures on the wall of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Gladstone and Old Allen Pinkerton, with his smug countenance and Scotch cap. There was a photograph of several husky detectives struggling with a crook. On the walls were also mottoes in frames, "After Clouds, Sunshine," "The Character of the Detective Must Be Without a Blemish," "Honesty is the Only Policy," and a number of others.

I was being paid for sitting there, but wondered what it all meant. Every night a young man, Joe Smith, poked his head in the door and told me: "Report at eight-thirty to-morrow morning in this room." This probationary ordeal was quite severe. The mental and physical examinations were exacting.



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

One day a shrewd-looking, smart-talking, clever little man with gray hair examined me at great length. "Can you do 'tail-end' work on a street car?" he asked.

"Conducting? Of course I can," I replied.

After complete instructions, he sent me over to Twenty-third Street and Fifth Avenue, Brooklyn, to apply for a job as conductor on Deacon Richardson's horse cars. There were no elevated trains in that district then and trolley cars were not dreamed of. The cars had little stoves in them. It was the conductor's duty to keep a good hot fire on cold days, but on medium cold days this was unnecessary, as the car floors were always covered with nice straw, and by autosuggestion the passengers were jollied into the belief that they were enjoying all the comforts of home. A lighted candle in the stove would have had the same effect, with the isinglass doors.

The fares collected were rung up by the conductors on a small apparatus that resembled an alarm clock. It hung on a strap around the conductor's neck. Every time a passenger paid, the conductor pressed a lever, a tiny bell rang, which was intended to signal that the company was get-



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

ting the nickel. The passengers, hating the company for bad service and cold cars, didn't care who got the nickel, but hoped the conductor got it. It was nip and tuck who was getting the most, the company or the conductors. It looked as though the conductors had a shade the best of it, because quite a few resigned and went into business—banking, saloon-keeping and the like. One conductor took his car home with him and asked the company to send for it, as he was through. One street car disappeared altogether, and was found in Coney Island several years later, occupied by a German family who had purchased it from a real estate speculator.

My job was to find out who was stealing, and how much. I was told to go as far as I liked on the job, to graft as much as the next one, but to get the evidence.

I had no difficulty in securing a job in this, my first detective assignment. I was soon on good terms with my driver, an Irishman, and learned that it was part of the game to hold out enough fares on the first trip from the car barn in the morning to buy a pint of whisky at the ferry terminal of the line.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

"I'll put you on to all the 'right ones,' " said my driver. "When a right one gets on the car, I'll ring the bell twice. When a Chinaman gets on with a big basket of wash, or a Hebrew with a bundle of pants, they don't ride for a nickel—they're supposed to pay a quarter. Live poultry and dogs are extra, too."

We carried practically the same passengers in the rush hours. A stranger in Brooklyn was a curiosity those days. I was not long in discovering that many conductors on the line had a "brother-in-law"—a little bell concealed in the palm of the hand to ring and sound the same as the register. They were made by a manufacturer of burglars' tools in the Bowery. He always warned his buyers that he was only making "chestnut bells" for them—at that time everybody carried a chestnut bell to ring if an old joke was sprung.

The evidence I secured led to the breaking up of this system, the arrest and conviction of many conductors, and the installation of clock registers.

My next assignment was at a race track to watch for professional criminals and counterfeit bookmakers' tickets. Here my experience in

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

the printing office came in handy, for I had a knowledge of paper and printing that made it easy to spot a counterfeit on sight.

Then followed some interesting work among anarchists. Revolutionary agitators were very busy in this country then, as well as in England and Europe. There had been numerous bomb outrages, and the German government began the investigation of political offenders and anarchists in this country, from the standpoint of possible designs upon that government. I mingled with revolutionists here, and personally knew the Chicago anarchists who were executed, as well as living revolutionists like Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman. Later I was sent to London, and under Superintendents Shore and Melville, of Scotland Yard, worked around Hyde Park, even becoming a radical soap-box orator. There I stayed until 1895, and upon coming home found that the American Bankers' Association, then having about one thousand members, was taking steps through the Pinkertons to combat the forgers and "yeggs" who were defrauding and robbing banks all over the country. Funds had been raised to finance a campaign

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

against bank criminals, and a protective department was being established in New York. I was chosen by the Pinkertons to supervise this work, and held that job from 1895 to 1907.

Here began my study of criminals through records which were an improvement upon those of the time, though they would naturally seem crude in comparison with the present-day information and identification systems of the police. Remember, we had no Bertillon system of measurements then, much less anything like Commissioner Henry's fingerprint system, which I afterward introduced into America; instead, I had to depend upon photographs and good descriptions, and, as I will show presently, the description of criminals or people of any kind is a fine art. The police officer no less than the novelist can, with one or two happy strokes, not only make you see a character in your imagination, but enable you to identify him in the flesh.

Up to that time, rogues' gallery records had been kept in books. We started a card system, which had more than one advantage. James O'Brien, bank forger, might be known by half a dozen aliases, such as "Pittsburgh Jim," "Sandy



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

O'Brien," "Jim the Penman," and so forth. The card system made it possible carefully to cross-index O'Brien under all these names, where his record in one place in a book right under "James O'Brien" might escape the investigator looking for "Jim the Penman." By the history system, too, it was possible to cross-index other and more important facts about criminals—their relatives, haunts, methods of working, prison records and the like. A criminal's method of working is often more significant than his name, aliases or record. To illustrate:

In the state of California, criminals are carefully recorded and indexed in a state identification bureau. Some time ago a burglary was committed, and detailed information about the method of working was sent to the state bureau. Some burglars are neat in their work, others careless; some respect property not taken away, others are destructive; some are skilled professionals, others obviously amateurs or beginners; one man will take food or a drink of liquor if there is any on the premises, while others will touch nothing. The California records are kept on punched cards, so that, given a report upon a



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

burglar who has done a job in, say, three or four characteristic ways, it is possible to run rods through the punch-holes in several thousand cards, and select maybe the half dozen pertaining to criminals who work in those particular ways. Well, in this case, when the rods were run through the cards, only one criminal was found who worked in that particular way, and the police knew where he was, and brought him in, and he confessed to the job.

In the bank protective work, I compiled a systematic "Who's Who" of yeggs and forgers. Taking two copies of a police publication in which criminal portraits were published, I mounted them on cards and kept them before me until they became as familiar as the picture of Dr. Woodbury on the soap, or Mr. Douglas in the shoe advertisements. We segregated the criminals according to the class of crime they were best known to operate in. Every morning I went to police headquarters to see criminals in the line-up, constantly visited the police courts, and journeyed to other cities when criminals of importance were in custody. Such a criminal might be an old yegg, or a new forger, or even

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

that extremely rare character, the skillful bank burglar. I had *carte blanche* to travel, and willingly went half across the country for the opportunity of seeing some particular person in the criminal world who was important in my branch of detection. I never lost a chance to interview a crook, and almost always got valuable information from him.

My system of methods required so much information that some of it could be supplied only by the criminal himself or his associates, and the only basis upon which it could be secured was through friendship, by treating him as a human being. Psychology plays a very important part in the detection of crime, the examination of suspected persons, and the securing of confessions. The most successful detective is the one who frankly pits his wits against those of the criminal or suspect.

With thieves of all kinds, from the petty sneak thief to the yegg and holdup bandit, you are, first of all, ninety-nine times in a hundred, dealing with a weak or warped personality that has seldom been treated fairly by police officers. If encountered soon after arrest, this type of criminal

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

is usually perplexed in addition. These remarks do not apply to the forger or swindler, who is a higher type of personality, with education or training in some craft. The true thief is "not all there" mentally or physically. His environment from birth has usually been wrong, and against him. He may be a child of thieves, for there are families of thieves, and families of families of thieves, and families of families of families. One such family formerly operated from Ohio, where a father and mother, both thieves, lived on a farm which was a training school for their own children, and for children they adopted and turned into criminals. Besides the destructive influence of such a heredity and home, those children were denied the association of normal children. They never learned to play children's games, or belong to the sand-lot baseball nine as they grew older, and the results of such upbringing are all too plain when the criminal is brought before a police examiner who recognizes the value of sympathy and psychology.

Simply to address a criminal kindly may win his confidence.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

"Why, you're the first 'bull' I ever met that I could talk to!" many a criminal has confessed to me.

Inquiries about a suspect's family touch responsive chords. "Have you a father? A mother? No sisters or brothers? If you are an orphan, then you are all the more entitled to sympathy, because you have never had advantages enjoyed by other boys and girls." Constant discussion of a prisoner's family almost invariably inclines him to talk freely.

Several years ago in an upstate New York city, the home of a prominent family was broken into, and jewels valued at forty or fifty thousand dollars stolen. Whoever did the job left hurriedly, and must have been injured, because blood-stained tools were left behind, and several rags showed that efforts had been made to stanch blood. Through two words of good description my suspicion was directed to a known criminal. Interviewing people in the neighborhood of the house that had been robbed, I found two quite humble persons who had seen a man around there shortly before the crime had been committed. One was an old apple-woman, who said she



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

would know the stranger again because he had "smiling eyes," and the other a street-cleaner who spoke very little English, but who, without knowing what the apple-woman had told me, said the stranger's face looked like that of a "hard-a tha guy," but his eyes were laughing. Among my criminal acquaintances in that particular line of work was a thief who fitted these descriptions so patly that his mental picture came into my mind while the apple-woman and street-cleaner were telling me what they knew. This thief was arrested, and brought to the town where the robbery had been committed, but I had very little evidence, except proof that he had been seen in the neighborhood. The prosecuting attorney felt sorry for me:

"Dougherty, I don't want to hurt your feelings," he said, "but there isn't one chance in ten that the grand jury will indict your prisoner, because you have found no evidence of injury, or where the blood came from."

"In that case I want to tell the prisoner before any one else," I requested. Going before the grand jury, I laid what little evidence I had before them.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

"Did you examine this prisoner carefully?" asked the foreman.

I said that my examination had been very thorough.

"Did you find any cuts upon him?"

I was compelled to admit that he had no cuts anywhere upon his body. The jury refused to indict. I hurried over to the jail, and asked the prisoner what he would do if he were released.

"Go back to New York on the next train!" was his answer.

"Well, get ready to go this afternoon, for you will be released."

We went back together on the same train, and were thoroughly intimate and friendly. But he was shadowed from that time, for several months. Early one morning he was seen to go uptown to a sparsely populated neighborhood, dig in the ground, take out something, and cover the hole he had made with earth. When we dug after he had gone, the missing jewels were found. He was immediately arrested, and admitted the robbery.

"Billy, how about that blood?" I asked.

"Well, I might as well tell you, Chief. You

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

know I've never gone in for any job where there'd be bloodshed, because I dread the idea of killing or hurting anybody. On this job, I was pressed for time. There was a last twelve-forty P. M. trolley car out of town on which I intended to make my getaway. I worked so fast, and got so nervous, that my nose began to bleed, and I couldn't stop it."

In its dealings with criminals, society has generally erred in two directions: first, by violence, severe punishment and treatment of the criminal as non-human, and at the other extreme, overflowing sentiment for the lost sheep.

As an example of sentimental treatment, I recall a benevolent woman of wealth in an eastern city who, some years ago, established a home for discharged convicts who promised to "go straight," and sincerely tried to help them lead honest lives. Suddenly an epidemic of thievery and robbery broke out in the neighborhood of that home, and investigation showed that this good lady's protégés were using the institution as a base for such operations.

Stop and think a minute. Suppose you know no other trade than that of a pickpocket or safe



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

robber. These are highly interesting vocations, full of chance and variety. You were probably attracted to them in the first place, and away from a humdrum factory or office job with a time clock, because they promised adventure. At some time in his career every criminal sees that crime, while exciting, is bad business, measured by the things honest men do to earn a living. At such a time, every criminal is hospitable to the idea of switching over to something "on the square." Many criminals make the resolution themselves. But you cannot take a man or a woman who has been leading the thrilling life of a criminal and make him or her happy at a colorless job. Nine times in ten, that is why efforts to reform criminals fail. This good woman had tried to reform her crooks by teaching them bookkeeping! Besides the uninteresting nature of their studies, they were well fed, and did not have enough work to blow off steam, and so they just naturally fell back into the old ways, like a lot of kids kept indoors on a rainy day.

Take an ex-criminal who wants to go straight, and put him in the movies, where one day he is a Turk, and the next day a motorman, and the

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

next day a general, and you have given him a job that he will thoroughly enjoy. It is hard to run steadily in low gear after you have been speeding along on high.

The effort a criminal will make to go straight himself is much greater than reformers suppose, and if they left off cuddling and sentimentalizing over him, and simply found him the right kind of chance, there would be many more lasting reforms. The greatest satisfaction I have had in my work is not that of successfully detecting crime and convicting criminals, but in helping them go straight after they had done their bit and paid their debt to society. After all, the greatest person in the world is the forgiver.

I could name a number of so-called hardened criminals—world's outcasts—for whom I have secured honest, decent employment, and who are now a credit to the community. I could mention a few who are well-to-do. It is a violation of all decency to recommend an ex-convict for employment without revealing his history. There are men—good men—who help the criminal, knowing his past, back to manhood. One of the largest automobile manufacturers in the

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

world has done more to reform these unfortunates than any one else. The moving-picture industry has done much for the criminal who wants to reform. The occupation is a pleasant and lucrative one, and does not require credentials or references. I often see some of my old-time friends of the underworld in mob scenes on the screen at picture theaters. Occasionally, I see one made up as a general or a sheik. They are employed as extras, moving from one agent or producer to another, and find steady, decent employment. It is one of the only places they do not suspect that any one guesses their past. The legitimate actor or actress—in or out of pictures—is not morbid or suspicious. Their sympathy is always with the unfortunate, as is their audiences'. Hence the feeling of freedom by the man of the underworld working as an "extra" in pictures or plays.

The difficulties encountered in the effort to "go straight" would often tempt an honest man to turn crooked. A criminal friend of mine, coming out of prison, resolved to go straight, and got a job with an express company. He liked the work, and was proud of earning an honest

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

living. He did so well that his very effort was his undoing. For the company promoted him until he had in prospect a job paying one hundred and fifty dollars a month. But to hold such a job he must be bonded, and there were years missing out of his life, years which he could not account for because he had been in prison. The express company discharged him. Still determined to go straight, he went into the wheat fields during harvest, worked at hard manual labor, and saved a couple of hundred dollars. Coming back to town in the fall, he was "gyped" out of his money the first night.

"You ain't cut out to be no square man!" he then said to himself despondently, and returned to a life of crime.

Not long ago, I wrote a story about Wainwright, a celebrated criminal. I gave him quite a send-off. In conclusion I wrote:

"I wonder, since his release from prison, if he is traveling the straight and narrow path?"

After the story was closed I wrote:

"N.B. I have just read in an evening paper of the arrest of a desperate criminal for holdup



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

robbery and murder in Boston. It sounds like my man back on the job again."

After the story was printed, Wainwright read it and wrote a letter of protest for what I had said in the last paragraph, stating he was leading a strictly honest life, and was no longer engaged in crime of any kind. But he made the mistake of asking me to write him to a post-office box near Boston. It was a state's prison. Wainwright was serving a life sentence for the very murder and holdup I'd read of. True, he was now leading an honest life!

I had helped an old crook named "Hod Bacon" a lot. He was the image of General Joe Wheeler. In his early days he had been a student of theology. What a preacher of the gospel the world lost when "Hod" became a criminal! He was principally a high-class hotel thief. How adroitly he turned them off! He robbed Denman Thompson of "Old Homestead" fame, Lillian Russell, Anna Held, senators, congressmen, etc. I found legitimate work for him. He liked it. At least, he said he did. One day he disappeared. About a week later the chief



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

of police of Pittsburgh called me on the telephone, and said he had a prisoner he did not know, who had been arrested upon the arrival of a Pennsylvania train from Chicago for the theft of a trunk full of jewelry samples from a salesman's room in the Palmer House. Did I know who he might be?

"Put him on the 'phone, Chief," I requested. He did. It was "Hod."

"Commissioner," he said, "I am the world's most famous boob. I stole this salesman's trunk clean, and why the devil I done it, I don't know. I also stole his overcoat. Went to Pennsylvania depot in Chicago, bought a ticket for Pittsburgh, checked the stolen trunk full of jewelry. Then I reserved and occupied a lower berth, and who the hell was in the berth opposite but the salesman I robbed. He recognized his overcoat, and here I am on the way to limbo forevermore."

He was. He died in Joliet prison. Talk about coincidence! He would not answer when I asked him why he quit his square job.

"You've sent a great many men away, Chief," people often say to me. "Don't you have to be constantly on your guard against men you have

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

convicted when they come out of prison? If I were in your business, I couldn't sleep at night!"

Again, failure to understand the criminal as a human being. Every criminal fully realizes that he is pitting himself against the law, and the force of society. In the very nature of his calling, he must take chances. When he wins, he gets gain and the thrill of adventure. When he loses, he blames his detector and judges for only two things: one is cruel treatment, and the other unfair treatment—violence and an unjust trial, or "framing" for some crime he did not commit. Given decent treatment, he is almost never resentful towards those who have apprehended and convicted him. The law is the law, and he knows that detectives and police officers are enforcing something as impersonal as the law of gravity. If *he is* treated like a human being, and the term of punishment fits his crime in his own estimation, far from being resentful, he is more likely to be grateful to the officer who saw that he got a square deal.

"Well, Commissioner, I got what's coming to me, and now I'm going away to do twenty-five

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

years," said a convicted criminal to me, after his trial. "All I want is your friendship, a 'World Almanac,' a pair of suspenders and a pair of slippers!" He got them.

I have always slept very well nights.

The best possible proof that criminals are human is their vanity. Like everybody else in life, they like to be told that they are the best, the greatest, the cleverest in their line—the "headliner." Newspaper headlines like "King of Safe Crackers" and "World's Most Adroit Swindler," are meat and drink to them. I remember one expert professional who, until the day of his death, considered it an outrage that Inspector Byrnes had left his picture and criminal record out of his well-known book—it was absolutely worthless as a book on that subject, he considered, without his picture and record.

"You call that a good job he done?" the vain criminal will protest, nettled by praise of some rival's work. "Say, listen! I can tell you fifty better jobs that I done myself." And he opens the gates of revelation.

My acquaintance with criminals satisfies me that they are devoid of many of the senses of

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

the honest man. They have shortcomings that lead to their making blunders, and their eventual arrest and conviction. Yet at the same time, in certain directions, they are precociously clever. Ninety per cent of the "good" criminals who go to prison—and by "good" I mean capable in their particular field of crime—become eager readers and students. They read not only current magazines and novels, but the classics, history, biography, science, and particularly technical books and magazines showing how things are done. The editor of a popular scientific magazine tells me that he has subscribers in practically every prison in the United States, and I know at first hand from one of the best safe blowers of the last generation that he learned how to use dynamite by reading the scientific articles in this magazine.

Criminals are often marvelously clever in their knowledge of people, for close study of human character is indispensable to their success and safety. The bank robber planning a job gives far more study to the character and habits of everybody likely to be in and around the bank at the time the crime is pulled off than the paying



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

teller gives to the stranger with a check, or the loan man gives to the business and character of the applicant for money. A woman blackmailer, highly successful in swindling elderly business men whom she encouraged to make love, once told me that the fun of putting it over on some of her doddering victims meant as much to her as the winnings.

Criminals have almost invariably a sense of humor that proves their humanity. They especially relish a laugh when it is on them.

A rope-ladder thief had successfully finished one of his difficult jobs. Fastening a rope ladder to a chimney on a roof, he had to climb down to a window below, force an entrance, climb up with his loot, and make his getaway. Coming out of a basement door, he saw his own shadow in the yard, and was so nervous that he fired at it, thereby bringing about his arrest. A mishap of that kind will cause more joy in criminal circles than one of Hashimuro Togo's funny Japanese school-boy letters.

A pickpocket worked all summer without an accident. Every week he sent a good proportion of his money home to his sister and mother.



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Coming home himself, after warm greetings, he wanted to know what had been done with the money.

"Why, Jim, I'll tell you," said the sister, a little hesitating. "You're in such a dangerous business that we often feel worried about you. So we gave the money to buy a stained-glass window in the church."

After his arrest, a skillful counterfeiter told me how his undoing came about. He had been a sign painter and was decidedly artistic and skillful. Coming to New York, he took a downtown office, painted "Real Estate" on the door, and used it as a workshop for painting imitation bank notes. He said that while it took no more time or work to imitate a hundred-dollar bill than a twenty, he had to make five twenties to get change for a hundred dollars, because the twenty-dollar bills were more easily passed. It was a hundred-dollar counterfeit that led to his downfall. Finishing it late one afternoon, he started for home, but stopped in a lower West side saloon to buy a drink and a bottle of whisky. Laying his hundred-dollar-imitation bank note on the bar, it came in contact with a little spilt

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

whisky, and the colors ran, leading to his arrest. Some years later I saw him in a penitentiary, and said "Well, Emanuel, I see you're still working at the old line." He was still working with a brush, whitewashing a prison wall.

It was in those days when I traveled about the country to see bank criminals that something occurred illustrating the humanness of criminals. I've told the story before, but it will bear retelling in this connection:

A bank had been robbed by yeggs in a little southern town. One of the criminals had been caught, with the money, and I went down there to see him. Excitement and suspicion prevailed in the only hotel the place had when I arrived there late in the evening.

"We're mighty careful about strangers here," the landlord explained as I washed up in a tin basin. "Our bank was burglarized night before last."

The sheriff took me to a little jail with a mud floor, and there I found one of the best bank burglars in the business—the kind of man I'd willingly go half across the country to see. We knew each other, and he told his story. Every-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

thing had gone according to plan at the bank two nights before, and he was just about to blow the safe with "soup," or nitroglycerin, when one of his pals outside reported that a woman upstairs had been aroused, and was telephoning.

"Shall I croak her?" asked the outside man.

"No, cut the wire—I'll be done here in a minute."

The telephone wire was cut, the safe blown, and the gang made for the railroad where they intended to escape on a hand car. But the woman had got part of her message through, and aroused the town. Greasing the hand car with "soup," they ran a couple of miles down the track, and then scattered for safety. He had the money, and kept on walking down the track in the dark. Suddenly he fell over a pile of ties that had been placed there to ditch the hand car, and officers and citizens began shooting promiscuously in the dark.

"Can that stuff!" he shouted, and they got him and the money.

"After they got me over in this calaboose," said Buck, "they brought in a bullet-riddled coat full of blood, said it belonged to one of my part-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

ners who was dying—breathing his last in the hospital. Would I confess on the others, they asked me.

“ ‘According to that coat,’ I said, ‘that guy needs a sky guide (preacher) more than I do. Get him to confess.’ ”

Of course it was all a fake.

Some years ago the late Nat Goodwin played “Fagan” in a stage version of “Oliver Twist,” and the part of “Bill Sykes” was played by Lynn Harding. I was invited to attend a performance and decide whether the actors were true to life in their portrayal of criminals, and also whether criminal methods had changed since Dickens’ day.

The play was fine melodrama, and the acting left nothing to be desired in thrills and strong characterization. But if “Fagan” or “Bill Sykes” had stepped off the stage on to Broadway, the first traffic officer they met would have arrested them on sight. They looked too much like criminals! And present-day criminals don’t.

For stage and movie purposes, it may be necessary to make criminals crooked to the point of being inhuman—otherwise drama would be color-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

less, and many people in the audience would fail to follow the story.

But in real life, the present-day criminal is generally human enough to pass among honest people as one of them. This is, in fact, one of the devices of his trade. The thief who goes through your suburban bedroom while the family is at dinner, far from being a stage "Bill Sykes," is the quietly dressed, decent-spoken young fellow who rode in the same seat with you on the 5:15.

To the officer accustomed to criminals, there are certain earmarks in their general make-up. The man who has served a term in prison is recognized by his measured mechanical tread. He feels that an injustice has been done him, is conscious that he has served a term, and it shows in his contemptuous, cunning, evasive expression.

But with all his shortcomings, the criminal may be more human than the law-abiding citizen sunk in his rut of respectability—more human in his emotions, his resourcefulness, his sympathies.

It is through understanding of his humanness that he is most often inspired to effect a genuine reform, either by his own initiative or the help of others.



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

And I have always felt that, taking into account the many obstacles to be overcome, within himself as well as outside, the wrongdoer who has succeeded in gaining a place for himself among honest men is perhaps just a little more human than most of the rest of us.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GENTLE ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

**L**ET us begin by supposing that you, Mr. Reader, pay us a professional call some morning, saying:

“Mr. Dougherty, I’m in real trouble. My partner and I have been in business together more than ten years, with practically no discord. But now I have reason to believe he is secretly working with competitors, not only to divert orders and customers, but to undermine our business. Deeply as I regret it, it is necessary that some one watch him, report upon his movements, and either confirm or dispel this suspicion.”

A job of shadowing.

Incidentally, there are many more reasons for shadowing persons outside the criminal world than for using this form of detection in criminal cases. And the shadowing of a person like Mr. Reader’s partner is at once more difficult than

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

the shadowing of the average criminal—and also simpler.

Difficult, because your partner is a business man, moving in a different world from that of the criminal, and moving in different ways. His office is in a skyscraper with twenty elevators and a half dozen exits. There is one business executive in downtown New York who is said to have his own private bridge between two skyscrapers, over which he passes to lunch. Shadow your partner from his office to the street, and he gets into a taxicab, so another car is needed in following him. In a congested city like New York there are not only skyscrapers and subways in which he may disappear, but skyscrapers with subway entrances. It is not inconceivable that a "subject" of this kind might get away from his shadow in an airplane.

But simple, too, because your partner, as a city business man, has formed habits which he follows daily, where the professional criminal leads a more varied life, passing from city to city, and neighborhood to neighborhood, and frequently changing his way of living as a matter of necessity.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

You decide that your partner is to be watched from the time he leaves his home in the morning until he returns there at night—though in certain cases it may be advisable to keep track of him twenty-four hours in the day. An operative is assigned—and in this connection let me say that he knows nothing of you, or the purpose of his work, and every effort is also made to keep from him the identity of your partner. His job is to report upon the daily movements of an individual designated as “33X,” and that is the designation used in his written report. He is also referred to as “the subject.” The greatest possible care is exercised in indicating the subject, commonly called “getting the spot,” lest there be not the slightest suspicion and no mistake. Some people object to designating the subject, because they feel a certain amount of guilt in having the work done; but there are always ways that the subject may be pointed out without his knowing it. The time-honored method of a twenty-five-year-old photograph “before Horace was married” and the incorrect description are things of the past. They used to lead to several days’ work—expense, much expense—and “you are following

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

the wrong man," commonly referred to as stupidity—ivory-headed work.

In a brief summary of your partner's habits, every city dweller will recognize himself—but not herself—for women are not so much creatures of habit.

Your man rises at the same time every morning, within limits of half an hour, takes just about the same time to get tubbed, shaved and dressed, and after breakfast emerges from his home, walks on the same side of the street to a corner, where he crosses at the same point, buys the same newspaper from the same newsdealer, who greets him in the same way, and then steps into the same trolley car. If he takes a subway or elevated train, the operative quickly classifies him as a first-car, last-car or middle-car rider, and will know where to look for him on a train. He gets out at the same station, climbs the same stairway, walks on the same side of the street to the same entrance of his office building, and very likely gets into the same elevator. The elevator starter greets him by name, the elevator operator knows his floor. In fact, the average city man not only finds it pleasant to be taken care of in his daily



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

routine by these people, who fit their habits into his own, but is proud of being greeted and taken care of—it feeds his sense of self-importance. In a large city, where few people know each other, this is especially so. To be spoken to, if only by a bootblack, newsboy or waiter, swells the individual all up. He likes it, falls for it—and pays for it. Maybe for a whole week he will not do anything unusual between his home and office. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday next week pass in the same automatic way. Then, on Friday, as he steps out of the subway entrance, some chance acquaintance greets him and he spends five minutes talking on the street. An operative shadowing his man soon learns that on Monday night, after dinner, he goes to a bowling alley, on Tuesday takes his wife to the movies, on Wednesday goes to church. Then, suddenly, on Thursday night, he walks through an unaccustomed street, takes a strange trolley car, and leads a wild-goose chase into some remote section of Brooklyn, maybe to take part in a good poker game at a friend's house, not getting home until one in the morning. But on Friday night he is back in his rut again. The only

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

other unusual thing that he did the whole week was to visit a sick lodge brother. The shadow often knows where he was, because he comes out with one or two other persons, and talks about how badly "Theodore" looked, or about the bum hand he held all evening.

Your woman—unless she is in business, employed—is not nearly as methodical as your man. She has the management of her home, the direction of servants, her own work to do. She often telephones her orders to the nearby grocer and butcher, and frequently doesn't leave home all day, or she may steal a few hours and go to the movies in the afternoon. She usually has babies and children to look after, and is kept in. Her hours to be out are quite unusual—infrequent, in fact,—and she is hard to keep a line on. Besides, a shadow can never anticipate what women will do. They are intuitive, and "drop" to the shadows much quicker than men, unless you cover them with smart women, which is frequently necessary, because once they enter a department store they go everywhere, from the basement to the roof—ride the elevators and the escalators. Women seldom suspect a woman, but soon won-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

der why the same man follows them, believing him to be a "masher." Women are much more difficult to shadow than men. They appear to be looking for it—are more alert and observing.

The apt shadow is decidedly different from the stalking, peering fellow you see following the hero or the crook in movies. For movie purposes, of course, he has to look and act as much like a sleuth as possible. In real life, the shadow never skulks or dodges his subject, and he is particularly trained not to watch him. Nowadays, he is generally a man of small stature, carefully chosen to be inconspicuous—quite ordinary. He is taught to be natural, and thus to attract no attention—wears dark suits, unnoticeable neckties, no colors or features in his clothes or appearance likely to be remembered.

If I asked you, as a city man, who rode opposite you in the subway this morning, or on either side, you wouldn't be able to tell, and if you were under observation, there is no reason why one of those people shouldn't have been a detective shadowing you. By his very boldness and deportment, the shadow walks or sits right alongside the subject, and if the latter notices him at

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

all, he says to himself, "Why, that fellow couldn't be a detective! He isn't big enough for a detective! He hasn't got a detective's feet. He's a clerk in some men's furnishing store."

Beneath his meek unnoticeable outer appearance, however, the apt shadow must have quick-witted resourcefulness. The significant thing may happen at any moment during a long day of routine coming and going by his subject. The latter may enter a strange house, meet and talk with a strange person, be in possession of vital information. The operative must always anticipate the unusual.

While shadowing a suspected person many years ago, after several weeks of tedious routine observation, during which I learned little, except what he liked for breakfast, lunch and dinner, the subject suddenly emerged from his hotel, carrying a bundle of circulars to the mailbox. In fifty paces, and not many more seconds, it was necessary to get possession of one of those circulars. I shan't say how it happened that they were knocked out of his hand and scattered on the pavement, but it was the most natural courtesy in the world for me to hurry to the gentleman's as-



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

sistance and help him pick them up—and keep a couple without arousing suspicion.

In the past twenty years, this art has been completely revolutionized by the automobile, subway, skyscraper, apartment house, and the crowds and conditions of city life. When I began detective work, my stature—I am a pretty big fellow, better than six feet in height and weighing more than two hundred pounds—was no particular handicap. On the contrary, as I will show presently, it could be turned into an advantage in more ways than one. To-day, the big man is under a handicap, and it is not only necessary to select inconspicuous types for this work, but very often to change them frequently. So, the operative who formerly did excellent work in actual shadowing, may, like myself, to-day be utilizing his experience in the assignment of certain types of operatives to certain subjects. You have all heard of the casting director who selects actors of suitable type for the movies, and admired his judgment on the screen. Well, presently I'll tell you something about the casting director who chooses shadow types for detective work.

For some kinds of shadowing, boys are now



## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

being used most effectively, youths crazy to learn the business, always detailed with a trained operative. Nobody suspects a boy, and the right kind of lad is a close observer—and you can understand, if you know boys, how interested they become in this kind of work. Boys past the school age, sixteen years old, are selected, and shadowing is their first training for general detective work.

In other cases, women operatives are necessary—not girls, but young women and sometimes middle-aged or even elderly. A great deal of observation work takes the operative into places where men cannot go—department stores, offices employing women, and so forth. This change in method has been made necessary by the broadening activities of women.

An elderly man, say sixty-five, with a white beard and benevolent appearance, makes an excellent shadow, provided the work is not too fast for him.

It isn't enough to be unnoticeable in physique and clothing. A good operative must be inconspicuous in his actions.

To illustrate: The shadow follows his sub-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

ject home from church on Sunday, and may have to keep a certain house under observation several hours. In other days this might have been done by taking up an inconspicuous post in the street, but even then a loitering stranger attracted attention sooner or later. Women spied him from windows, merchants saw him from their store doors, the policeman on the post made inquiries. Still, by resourcefulness, he could distract attention or account for himself. I found the "letterbox" explanation highly effective.

"You have been waiting here quite awhile," the little Jew pants presser would suggest, coming out of his shop with a suit to be delivered.

I was non-committal.

"My! this must be a big case you are working on," persisted the little clothes presser.

"Well, yes—it is," I would admit. "But if I tell you what the case is, of course you won't tell anybody else?"

"Oh, no!"

"Do you see that letterbox? Well, we have reason to believe that criminals intend to break into it and take certain important letters that will

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

be mailed, or even hold up the letter-carrier and get them when he comes around."

In a little while everybody in the neighborhood would have his or her attention centered so closely on the innocent letterbox that they'd stop speculating further about the real purpose of the observer. In other words, their curiosity has been satisfied.

Besides the risk of arousing suspicion, there is the great tedium of remaining in one restricted locality hours at a time, waiting for something to happen. This is the unattractive side of shadowing, offsetting its moments of action and excitement. The shadow would always much rather "have" his subject than not "have" him—be busily traveling with him even under conditions that call for the greatest exertion and resourcefulness than be waiting outside while he is eating dinner, taking a nap, or visiting his Aunt Harriet.

To escape observation, do his work under pleasanter circumstances, and keep out of the disagreeable weather, the operative frequently uses the furnished room, rented in an adjoining house, when an ordinary looking glass is used in

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

the window to cover the entrance to the house where the subject is, or from a room opposite, or nearly opposite—down the block a bit is best—from which the subject's domicile can be kept constantly in sight. Some of the greatest shadowing in both criminal and non-criminal cases has been done from furnished rooms or similar "plants" in the neighborhood.

While engaged in the investigation of a taxicab robbery some years ago—an exciting holdup then, involving twenty-five thousand dollars of bank money, but which would be considered prosaic in these times—members of the New York detective force were planted in an empty store opposite a building under observation. Curtains were rigged over the windows, with peep holes, and the officers sawed and hammered boards, "getting the store ready for a big firm moving uptown." Whenever certain people emerged from the boarding house they were followed and their acquaintances investigated. This was known as "Plant No. 21," and proved a big factor in apprehending and convicting the robbers.

The automobile has helped the detective along



## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

with the criminal by providing him a new "plant" for street work—the waiting taxicab. Apparently nothing could be more inconspicuous than a taxicab standing in one spot hour after hour. Mr. Chesterton wrote a good mystery story in which the crime was committed by a postman who was not included in the suspicions about the people who had gone into the house of mystery and come out, because nobody paid particular attention to the postman. Nor does anybody pay particular attention to the waiting taxicab in a city street, and it is possible for an operative to step into such a taxi, close the door, sit down, and watch unsuspected for almost any length of time.

After hours of waiting for something simple to happen, like a certain person coming out of a house and following his accustomed route to the "L" station, the tedium will be broken by an unforeseen turn of great complexity. The subject comes out of the house, but goes in an entirely different direction. He comes out with another person, known and of great importance in the investigation. He comes out, and meets an unknown person of possible importance, talks with



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

him or her in the street, at too great a distance to be overheard, and they separate, taking different directions. Such developments are significant in their smallest details because "connections" are now materializing in the case—persons of central interest in a crime, committed or being planned, are meeting or exchanging information, or likely to lead the shadow to other persons of importance whose whereabouts are as yet not known.

The operative is alone, but he must keep track of two or three separate individuals and promising "leads."

In all but the simplest cases, two or more operatives work together or succeed each other in shifts. When things are quiet, a single operative may be left to watch alone. But if a sudden development of action occurs, in which it is necessary to follow one subject in an unknown direction, or keep track of two or more persons, the shadow has certain resources. To begin with, there is the police or detective organization back of him. He often has time to step into a telephone booth and report under a name or number, summoning aid. If this is not possible, he

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

will leave a code signal to be found by his partner when the latter turns up and finds him gone. An inconspicuous arrow, made with chalk, points in the direction the subject has taken him. A circle on the arrow indicates that he will telephone at the first opportunity. Such marks may be put on houses, and look like the small boy's work, or on the curb and pass unnoticed as surveyor's marks. A messenger boy can often be temporarily hired to keep track of a second line of interest, or the operative selects a citizen whose looks indicate that he has the necessary intelligence and character to be helpful, and quietly presses him into service. Incidentally, the well chosen citizen is invariably eager to help a detective for pure adventure, all except one citizen—an occasional taxicab driver. If the operative finds it necessary to step into a taxicab and tell the driver, "Follow that car wherever it goes," after a few blocks the mercenary kind of taxi man is very likely to say, "This is detective work, not ordinary driving, and I want to be paid what it's worth—and if you don't come across, I'll tip off the people in that car you're following." There are many loyal, hon-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

est taxicab chauffeurs, however, who would never resort to such methods—in fact, the honest ones are in the majority. They always look for and get a good tip in this unusual work.

“Connections” are often hard to cover, and at the same time are the detective’s chief means of piecing his case together. It’s a good deal like a jig-saw puzzle in which you start with one piece that fits into other unknown pieces. To make it clearer, a suspect “A” in Kansas City is known to be involved in a given crime. He has accomplices B, C and D, as yet unknown. There is no evidence worth taking into court. If A is shadowed long enough, he will probably meet one of the others, or write to him, or communicate in some way, and the detective gets another piece to fit into his jig-saw puzzle. But the professional criminal has ways of hampering the operative. A will meet B in the center of a park, where it is not easy to get within hearing distance without observation. They will meet in the street, stand several feet from each other, and talk without moving their lips. From the criminal’s standpoint, the telephone is a great invention for “connections,” because it involves

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

no writing, leaves no evidence, and is private except in cases where wires are tapped, something that is resorted to by criminals and detectives in certain cases.

In swindles and bank forgery, for example, there are several different criminal specialists who work as a team—the capitalist who plans and finances the job, the forger who alters or makes the false documents, the middleman who alone meets the forger and passes the documents along to the presenter, who is, in turn, the only individual seen by bank officials. To secure conviction in some cases, and to put such a gang out of business in all cases, it is necessary to keep the suspects you know under observation until they reveal the ones you do not know. These forgers have their shadows, who watch the presenters to make certain that they will not decamp with the money after drawing it from the bank, stopping the double cross.

The difficulty of getting information in many cases will be appreciated when the reader knows that the moment a shadow begins to “dog” his subject, he’s done—his character is clearly revealed.



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Among the unforeseen things that may happen in shadowing, your man may commit a crime, or get into a fight, or be involved or hurt in an accident. I once shadowed a man who dropped dead while I had him under observation. Your subject may do something that makes you itch to thrash him. One of the employees in a certain establishment where goods of great value were handled was assigned to me for observation after business hours. During the day he was a saint, but at night he strolled through the streets annoying women in ways so obnoxious that any man with red blood needed all his self-control to keep hands off of him.

Operatives are not only changed in all but the simplest cases, to prevent discovery, but as a check on each other. Operative No. 1 will report on a subject for several days, and then No. 2 is assigned and reports, the two reports being compared to show that the work is being done well and honestly. In all but the simplest cases it is necessary to "change the faces" frequently.

When an operative loses his subject, he reports the fact by telephone, and waits until he can be picked up again. That may be easy in



## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

the case of a business man of regular habits—you are simply on hand when he comes out of his home to-morrow morning, though he may have done things that are vitally important after you lost him yesterday afternoon. If it is a professional criminal, he may have left town after eluding you.

It is no crime in shadowing to lose the subject, but it doesn't occur often. Interest prevents it. There are so many ways in which he can escape intentionally or otherwise.

Perhaps it will be interesting to tell you how to lose a shadow on your own trail. Go into a skyscraper with numerous elevators, ride up to the twelfth floor, get out and ride down to the second floor, ride up to the twentieth floor and down again— After you've done that half a dozen times the shadow will generally have been left behind, for it is difficult for him to always get in the same elevator with his subject, and, unless he does, the latter stands every chance of eluding him. A public market is one of the best places in the world to drop a shadow—like the skyscraper, it has many entrances and exits. Investigation of the possible exits from a building

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

into which his subject has gone is of the utmost importance to the operative, and he will not overlook the possibility of escape over roofs, because in many city blocks roofs are veritable highways for criminals.

“You must have to use a good many disguises, don’t you?” people ask the detective.

Yes, they are becoming more and more important every day. But instead of donning false whiskers himself, “Old Sleuth” resorts to those made by the Creator—uses the real thing by selecting a suitable type of old gentleman who has the right whiskers and everything else that goes with them. False whiskers do not fool the camera in moving pictures—what chance is there of fooling people in real life? Yet, quite a range of disguise is available to the detective if he understands how trifles change one’s appearance. He may carry a soft hat in his pocket, substituting it for a cap, to escape being remembered by his subject, or to fall into the character of a certain neighborhood. There is quite a range of disguise in the collar and necktie assortment in any furnishing store. A soft collar makes you look like one sort of fellow, and if it

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

is dirty, like another, while a formal stiff collar, just a shade less severe than that worn by a clergyman, will completely transform you without changing any other clothes except perhaps your hat. Neckties can be used to alter your weight and height within certain limits, a thin four-in-hand making a vertical line beneath the face decreasing its width, and so forth.

There is a lot of good disguise in facial expression. Not contortion of the features, like the "Man With a Hundred Faces," but the assuming of a blank, stupid, jovial or guileless expression, according to circumstances.

On one occasion I was invited by a gentleman who taught character reading to appear before one of his classes as a subject. There were thirty or forty intelligent pupils who were finishing the course, and the Professor introduced me as "John Barry, an interesting subject," and it was up to his students to read me. I assumed an expression that combined the dumb and the resentful. "Wot the hell do you want of me here?" my countenance said, as the Professor presented me, and when a pupil rose to expound my character, I watched him suspiciously.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

“Well, come, now,” urged the teacher, after a dozen students had declared me a coarse, unresponsive sort of fellow, hard to get along with, lacking in intelligence. “Would you give this subject a job—and if so, what kind of a job?”

The best any of the men students offered was driving a motor truck. But in the class there were two women students, and my change of expression didn't fool either of them—they protested that I looked intelligent, was not difficult to get along with, and that the right sort of training should fit me for executive business!

After the guesses were all in, the Professor introduced me by my right name, I threw off the disguise, and made a short talk, guying the men and complimenting the ladies, and we had a very pleasant time.

Certain types of shadow fit certain people, also certain neighborhoods. Therefore in making assignments, the same as a casting director in moving pictures, the type suitable for the subject and his district are detailed. Men covering people in big hotels usually become guests there, dress and look the part—are genteel, wear evening clothes, have entrée to the high-class cab-



## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

arets, dancing clubs, etc. A workingman type in cap, sweater and rough clothes is cast to cover a truckman, laborer or mechanic. Colored operatives are assigned to duty in colored neighborhoods. Italians are sent among Italians. A Jew always succeeds among his own people, as does an Irishman. Old men work on people of their age. Young people are assigned to duty among young people. The same with women. Wearing glasses to change the appearance is an old but good trick. Disguises are impractical, easily penetrated, and hold any one up to ridicule. The best disguise is the natural character to fit the case. A man with a silk hat and evening clothes cannot cover a man in the slums, any more than the roughneck can shadow in the élite hotels, theaters and restaurants.

Many undersized policemen, detailed to the detective division, shadow criminals, good, high-class expert professionals, until they catch them doing a job. This is especially true of safe burglars and loft men, always looking for "a tail" (shadow), but many times caught in the act by them. In the New York City police department there have been many such cases.



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

The art of "roping" is practically the reverse of shadowing.

For where the shadow observes his subject without becoming known, the "roper" gets into his confidence, associates with him, and virtually leads him to shadow himself. The shadow follows his subject to the place he is going, but the "roper" works to get there before him. Here is where the big man has his inning, for while the shadow succeeds chiefly by being insignificant and self-effacing, the "roper's" ends are often served best by forceful or even domineering personality. Instead of cultivating his subject, worming his way into his confidence, he puts upon him the burden of getting acquainted and keeping in good grace.

I once heard a shrewd, old employer tell a young salesman, that, when he called upon a big customer for the first time, instead of giving the customer a cigar, he should let the great man give him one, as it usually pleased him much better. That is the principle of roping. You let the subject give you the cigar.

While I was in my early twenties, I had a case in which shadowing led right into roping through

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

an unforeseen circumstance. It shows the difference by contrast.

My subject was the gentleman whom I helped pick up the scattered circulars. After several weeks' observation, during which he did not know me from Adam, I suddenly learned, late one afternoon, that he was taking a fast train to another city. To ride on that train, it was necessary to have a Pullman seat, and I seemed to be right up against it when the ticket seller told me that there were no more seats or berths available, except as far as Albany, in a parlor car which would be taken off there. My subject was going on to another city, and had a berth. Taking a chance, I rode to Albany in the parlor car, got off, walked out with the disembarking passengers, and immediately came back, grip in hand and overcoat on, boarding the Pullman in which my subject was riding, as though I were an Albany passenger taking the train. The conductor said he might have a berth later, and meanwhile would give me a seat in the smoking compartment. I had hardly hung up my coat and stowed away my grip before the subject came in, sat down alongside of me, and entered

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

into conversation. It was natural to ask how far I was going. In a shy, boyish way, I told him that I lived in a certain Corn Belt city, where my father published a daily paper. Father had sent me on East to see what I could learn in the way of new ideas in the publishing business. After inspecting the great newspaper offices of New York, Philadelphia and Boston, I was now going to the very same town as himself for further study. Where did I intend to stop? Well, I thought about getting a furnished room somewhere. In a kindly way, he spoke of that city as being a place where a young stranger like myself might fall into bad hands, and suggested that I come to a very good reasonable rate hotel where he always stopped.

Well, the conductor found me a berth, and I went with my subject to his hotel, got an adjoining room, and for weeks we were intimate. In the morning I'd leave to visit newspaper offices, while he went about certain business of a highly criminal nature. Arrangements were made by my organization, so I received letters from my "father" in the town where he was supposed to publish a newspaper, and these letters were left

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

where the subject could read them. While he was away I had access to his papers. When he came in at night, he would sit down and tell me whom he had met, though, of course, not what business had been transacted. His scheme involved people in pretty high places, so he took a little pride in telling the green small-town kid every evening that he had met and talked with the great Mr. So-and-so. As a shadow, I might have followed him through the day and seen him meet Mr. So-and-so, and had great difficulty in finding out who the latter was. My reports would have been valuable, but nothing like the detailed information secured by the intimate association of the "roper" with his subject. The ethics of the thing are not complicated when you remember that this gentleman had criminal designs upon large sums of money belonging to decent, unsuspecting people. Eventually, months afterward, by keeping in correspondence with him, I joined him in California, and procured information of much value to interested parties.

One of the most interesting cases of this sort that I ever had was assigned me in my early



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Pinkerton days. A revolting murder had been committed in a small country town, and suspicion pointed to a party whose guilt could not be proven in court for lack of evidence. He was locked up in the town jail. There being no witnesses to the crime except himself, any information likely to aid in his conviction must come from himself. So I was sent to that town to get into jail, and into the confidence of the prisoner.

Getting into jail seemed a simple matter. All I had to do was to take along a few burglar's tools, break into some good man's store, steal merchandise of sufficient value to qualify for grand larceny, be arrested and sent to jail by the local prosecuting attorney, who alone knew my purpose and true character.

Well, it took me several days to get into jail! It was such a little town that when the proprietor of the hotel locked up for the night everybody had turned in. The chief difficulty in burglarizing was, not to break into a store, but to get out of the tightly-locked hotel—I had to burglarize my way out! Committing a successful robbery on the main street, I returned to the hotel with my loot. The next morning the town



## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

was excited over Deacon Jones' loss—but nothing happened. So I wrapped up some of the loot, took it down to the express office, shipped it to New York—and nothing happened. Another robbery was committed the following night, but suspicion did not point in my direction. Finally, it became necessary to actually hold up the town jeweler and take three gold watches. That marked me as a dangerous criminal, and got me into the jail. I need not say that all the stuff I looted was “recovered” and returned to the rightful owners later.

My reputation as a dangerous criminal was so great that at first they chained me in a bare stone cell and handed my meals cautiously through a window. It became necessary to talk myself out of that situation, get into more comfortable quarters, and work towards the suspect who was to be “roped.”

Eventually we became cell mates. He was suspicious, and talked very little, while I made no effort to cultivate his acquaintance—was a little hard toward him, as a crook outside my class. He began to be interested, however, when my “lawyer” came up from New York to prepare

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

my defense. This legal-looking gentleman in silk hat and blue overcoat was really one of our operatives. As he went over my case, and suggested ways of meeting a situation that looked black for me, the subject became interested, and eventually unloaded his crime.

As I have said before, shadowing is used for many purposes apart from crime, and roping to a lesser degree.

You employ twenty salesmen, for example. One out of the twenty may get to turning over in his mind the possibility of taking orders to a competitor for a larger commission than you pay him. He has to be a dirty skunk to do it, yet a certain small number of salesmen in the business world yield to such temptations, and shadowing is often the most direct way to confirm or refute suspicion. It is necessary for business concerns to check up the lives of trusted employees out of office hours, to investigate and offset radical agitation among employees, to protect employees from swindlers or extortionate money-lenders—in fact, many problems in business eventually come down to an investigation of parties, known or unknown, who are do-

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

ing things about which it is vitally important to have more information.

To illustrate, a certain corporation had reason to believe that its payroll at an important division was being "padded"—either the wages of actual employees were inflated, and part of the money kept somewhere along the line, or wages were being drawn for purely fictitious employees.

Assigned to this job, I dropped into this division town one Saturday afternoon on a freight train, not as a hobo, but a traveling worker looking for a job. There was a ball game going on between two teams drawn from the division organization. I participated in the preliminary practice, and being a good sand-lot player, was asked to join one of the teams. After the game, which we won, my fellow players naturally wanted to know who the stranger was, what he did, where he was going, and so forth.

"Have you got a place to put up at?" asked the captain of the team, and when I said "No," took me to his own boarding house. Finding that I was familiar with some of the work done in the company's shops, he got me a job Monday morning, and I spent several weeks in the town,

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

became a leader in its sports, social life and doings generally, made many friends among its honest people, got onto intimate terms with its dishonest ones, and ultimately secured the evidence that stopped the padding of the payroll, and convicted a superintendent and several of his accomplices.

To most people, shadowing and roping seem mean, sneaking, spying occupations, but the operative in those lines is to-day, and has been for years, as necessary in the world's business affairs as the certified accountant. He is, in fact, an accountant or auditor of character, checking up a thousand and one persons and situations. How many bank employees do you suppose are shadowed for their habits on the "wheel system" originated by myself, whereby seven different subjects are observed seven different days by seven different shadows? In a city like New York, there are literally thousands of "key men" in finance and other lines of business about whom it is necessary to know the comings and goings each day and night in the week. The subject who teaches Sunday school on the Sabbath may have been betting at the races Saturday after-



## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

noon, or in a city poolroom. The bonding companies give many bank employees the "once over" at regular intervals to see how they are behaving—inspect their characters just as the auditor inspects their accounts. It is routine practice in many business houses to investigate men who are being considered for promotion. The executive has his eye upon a man whose work and office record make him a promising man for a bigger job, but he is cautious. A week's clean-cut shadowing tells the whole story. It is indeed pleasant to receive a report showing that the man you have in mind lives a straight life, and that your judgment has been right. And how pleasant for the man under investigation, though he knows nothing of it. In these days model young men are scarce, and the "model" is generally a sissy, not worth promoting.

In cities, the shadow has the advantage of crowds—it might almost be called protection. When his subject leads him to country towns, however, different methods are necessary. Nothing attracts attention quicker in a country town than the loitering about of a stranger who can-



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

not account for himself. When one of my subjects led me to a country town, I first studied his habits of living there, and if it seemed likely that he would remain in the town some time, or I made certain that he could not disappear without my knowing it, then I turned my attention to becoming inconspicuous myself. Twenty minutes' study of the local telephone directory would give sufficient working knowledge of the town's business to enable me to keep up an appearance of genuine affairs by my coming and going and guarded dropping of names. On such "business" it is possible to keep a hotel, or one subject in it, under observation fifteen hours a day, yet actually be in the hotel only for meals and sleep. In every country town there are public places where one can plant oneself and be hidden. The best place of that kind I ever found was the small-town public library. Seated with *Puck* or *Harper's Young People* propped up in front of you, you were practically hidden, and with a volume of Edgar Allan Poe's stories you could stay there as many hours as you pleased without exciting curiosity, the librarian sympathetically approving your interest

## ARTS OF SHADOWING AND ROPING

in good literature. Some of the most enjoyable reading I have ever done has been in small-town public libraries while shadowing various kinds of subjects.

Far from feeling that his occupation is underhanded or mean, the clever, careful, reliable, invisible shadow considers himself an artist in a difficult profession. He is proud of it, even vain of his ability to observe and not be observed, dotes on invisibility, his facility at being present, seeing all, and not being seen. Many are trained in this work, but few succeed. Most candidates are too conscious of what they are doing. They "spot" themselves. Their very expression indicates that they are engaged in some mysterious, irregular service. They become suspicious themselves, and make everybody else suspicious. How often you have said, "I'll bet that fellow is a detective," and been right in your guess. On the face of many a man highly capable as a preventer of crime, and particularly in department stores, there is an expression of worry and apprehension that marks him, and makes him utterly unfit for shadowing. The shadow's expression must indicate that he is

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

somebody else—a contented clerk, a bluff truck driver, a man about town, a retired shopkeeper. He must be discreet, alert, loyal, persistent, intensely interested in his work.

Most of all, he must be accurate and unbiased. He takes no sides, accuses nobody, judges nothing. The professional accountant, auditing business records, simply presents the facts as he finds them in the books, for others to act upon. The professional shadow, as an auditor of human character, also presents the facts as he finds them, and it is for others to act. Knowing that the happiness, the future, very often the innocence and liberty of others, depend upon his reports, he is scientifically impartial in getting the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

## CHAPTER III

### THE STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

WHEN George M. Cohan, my friend and fellow Friar, conceives the idea of a play, and works it out in the manuscript, doubtless, as the different characters take shape in his mind, he thinks of a certain actor or actress who could play this or that part. When his play is ready for staging, probably he knows either the appropriate actors or the appropriate types, and is ready to engage them directly or through a theatrical agency. Generally, that is the way they do it in the theater.

Now, a good many forms of crime are staged in almost the same way.

The parallel between the theatrical profession and the criminal profession is very close. Robbing a bank, or gem shop, or "pennyweighting" a valuable ring from a jewelry store, or getting a large sum of money from the victim of a wire-tapping game, and practically every other big crime, necessitates the invention of dramatic in-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

cidents and the use of criminals as actors therein. They are as carefully planned as any theatrical production. Far from being a reflection upon the theatrical profession, this parallel is really a compliment, for the criminal drama is almost invariably good art. It has to be, because when this sort of show fails with its public, somebody goes to prison.

The cast might be as follows:

### *Characters in the Order of Their Appearance*

THE FINDER	<i>Gentleman George</i>
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THE HEEL MAN	<i>Little Horace</i>
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THE DIRECTOR	<i>Jim Arthur</i>
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THE CHARMING YOUNG MOTHER	<i>Kate Brady</i>
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THE MAID	<i>Minnie the Flapper</i>
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THE BABY	<i>By Himself</i>
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THE NEAR-SIGHTED CUSTOMER	<i>Deafy Moore</i>
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THE TRUCKMAN	<i>Mike Callahan</i>
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THE MILLIONAIRE CRIPPLE	<i>Deepsea Donahoe</i>
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ASTONISHED CITIZENS, VOLUNTEER PURSUERS,  
INFORMATION SEEKERS, ETC.



## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

In one respect it is a finer art than the theatrical production because, where the latter is carefully rehearsed, tried in an outside town, changed and improved, and the actors become proficient in their parts by repeated performances, the criminal drama is in most cases produced only once. The next time it is necessary to stage that particular type of show, it must be entirely different in its characters, and generally in its plot.

Like theatrical productions, these criminal dramas are rehearsed, but the players must be instantly ready to improvise new lines and incidents. The theater cat may walk in on a stage actor's scene, or somebody miss a cue, making a situation to be saved by quick wit and a ready remark. In the criminal drama the stage cat is likely to walk on any moment.

In a good many years of dealing with criminals, I have repeatedly been impressed by the amount of good stage management and acting necessary for successful crime. The professional criminal of even the least intelligent type is instinctively an actor, while the work and thought put into the planning of crimes by crim-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

inal leaders arouses one's admiration for the artist and regret that undoubted talent should be wasted in wrongdoing.

Near the beginning of this chapter I have arranged the cast of a criminal play. It may be called "The Great Diamond Robbery." We will begin with the very first conception of that play and follow it through the writing, casting, rehearsal and production.

The play begins when the "finder" locates the first thing absolutely necessary for this kind of drama—a place where it can be successfully staged. The "finder," known to few as an associate of criminals, is genteel, passes unquestioned anywhere, and is a skillful reader of character. He does no criminal work himself, and is never seen by any of the people who commit the actual crime, or their accomplices, except the "heel man," who is the chief criminal. The "finder's" function is to locate, study and report upon in great detail the place where the crime is to be committed.

"Say, I've got a soft mark," he says to the "heel man," meeting him to propose business. "It's a big jewelry shop where they've gone in

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

for this drawing-room stuff. Instead of counters, they have cabinets for the jewelry, and the boss is never seen out in the store, but sits back in a private office, and the salesmen take the best customers to him for a consultation. Why, say! they're so swell, and try so hard to avoid the appearance of business, that customers are allowed to take a valuable article and walk over to the door alone to get a better light on it. I tell you it's soft!"

He goes on to explain what might be called the stage setting. There are so many salesmen and employees in the place. The chief salesman is leading a gay night life, and often comes down to work in the morning dull-witted. Another clerk is an inexperienced boy, lately hired. The brightest salesman in the place is a Hebrew-American—can't put anything over on him, and nothing must be done while he is there. Another good head is the jeweler's woman secretary. At twelve-thirty the boss goes to lunch in a club several blocks away, and the Jewish salesman goes home for his lunch five or ten minutes later. Five minutes to one is the best time to work, because at that hour there are the fewest

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

employees on the premises, and those the least likely to be troublesome, while the chances of customers coming in are remote. He gives the "heel man" a diagram of the place, and if the latter undertakes the job, they talk about the percentage each is to get from the proceeds.

The heel man heads the "heel mob," or the gang that is to stage the criminal drama. But he is seldom a dramatist or stage director himself, because his work is of a decidedly different character. The director is another member of the "mob," skillful in originating parts, assigning them to capable actors, rehearsing the production and turning it over to the heel man on the day it is presented to the public for a single performance only.

Studying the situation, the director finds that there are three or four persons inside the store to be "covered" at the hour chosen for the crime, a uniformed doorman outside, and a building, street or alley through which the "getaway" is to be made. He must know when the policeman is off post for lunch, whether he is relieved or not, and how clear in this respect the coast is. He selects accomplices not only capable of look-



## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

ing and playing the different parts without arousing suspicion, but people who, while criminals, have never been "mugged" or recorded in the rogues' gallery. This is important, to prevent detection of the actual criminal through identification of some one playing a minor rôle in the drama.

The actors chosen, they meet for instructions and rehearsals. The finder generally comes to this rehearsal to make suggestions and give additional information, but he is seen by no one except the heel man. Sitting in another room, he is consulted by the latter when any doubtful points about the stage setting of the drama are to be cleared up. Incidentally, I may say that curiosity is as keen in criminal circles as elsewhere, and there is always much speculation and guessing by members of the "mob" about the identity of the finder. Also, he may be like the unsuccessful playwright, in that his ability at locating "soft marks" is not particularly good, or he may have been connected with failures. In that case, his "job" is peddled around from "mob" to "mob," until everybody in that part of the criminal community knows about it, and



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

knows him, and word will probably pass to the police through a "stool pigeon" or informant. Such crimes are often prevented in that way, but the cleverest criminals are naturally hard to locate in advance, and the capable finder is especially skillful at preserving his incognito.

The stage is set—the actors are made up—the psychological moment arrives—the curtain rises:

Into the fashionable jewelry store, at nine minutes to one, walks a pretty, well-gowned young matron with a baby, followed by a deferential maid. She is charming, for like the ingenue in a theatrical play, she must hold attention by making people like her, and want to serve and please her. But she is a criminal, and the maid is another—even the baby is a teething crook!

Turning to the most alert clerk on duty, she asks for something least likely to be found in a jewelry store—a rattle for the baby. He has been such a good baby! She has decided to buy him the best rattle obtainable. The perplexed clerk tries to remember whether there are any baby rattles in the store, and where they were

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

put, and the charming young mother simply will not let him say, "Yes, we have no rattles," until he has ransacked the most unlikely places.

At eight minutes to one, a totally different character enters the store. He is a middle-aged gentleman who wants to purchase something very inexpensive, and is so near-sighted that another salesman whom he is to "cover," catches the infection and is soon intensely peering at the merchandise too. A perfectly respectable customer, with neat gray whiskers parted in the middle—who would suspect him?

Another minute, and a rough-looking fellow who might be a truck driver enters to "cover" the third and last employee in the store—the inexperienced young apprentice.

"Anybody by the name of Simpkins here?" he demands loudly, and insists upon knowing where Simpkins is. "Anybody of that name ever work in this store, young fellow? Would he be upstairs, now?"

Yet another minute, and a fine closed car draws up outside the store, and a well-dressed gentleman, evidently a millionaire, with a pair of crutches beside him on the seat, beckons to the

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

doorman and begins making inquiries, detaining and keeping him away from the front door. His wife, he says, left the car half an hour ago to do some shopping, and he has lost track of her. This jewelry store was one of the places she intended to visit. Has the doorman seen a lady answering such-and-such a description?

In these three or four minutes, another character has entered the store, but invisibly. He is the "heel man," undersized, inconspicuous in appearance and dress, absolutely unnoticed. His part in the drama is to enter the place while attention is distracted, get to a certain cabinet, quietly and stealthily break into it or manipulate a spring lock, take jewels that have been marked as of greatest value, as many trays as he can empty into a cloth carrier about his body, and get out again. Literally, he is there for two or three minutes, yet is not seen. One of the clerks may notice an insignificant stranger standing around a moment to be waited on, but his own attention is distracted by the watchful crook covering him, and the next moment the stranger has vanished into thin air. He has "ducked for the

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

damper," in the vernacular—gone to "pull the sneak."

The robbery may be committed without discovery. In "pennyweighting" jobs, where worthless duplicates of valuable jewels are substituted, the loss may not be discovered for several days, and then it is often difficult to convince the merchant that the work was done by outside criminals. I was engaged upon one "pennyweighting" case some years ago in which jewels to the value of many thousands of dollars were stolen by substitution, repeated thefts over several weeks, the criminals coming again and again. The proprietor of the establishment would not believe that it was the work of outside criminals, but suspected that it was an "inside job" by his employees, and had them shadowed, their handwriting studied by an expert, and investigated in other ways. We caught the crooks in their work. They were all professionals—mostly from the western cities, little known in the East.

Should the robbery be committed without attracting attention, the drama quickly comes to a natural and happy ending. The truck driver



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

departs to look next door for Simpkins, the near-sighted gentleman decides he will have to come in again, the charming young mother finds no rattle good enough for the baby, the crippled gentleman in the automobile is finally convinced that the doorman is not concealing his wife.

Should the "heel man" be discovered, however, each actor in the drama helps his getaway by new devices for distracting attention. The near-sighted customer joins in the cry of "Stop thief!" set up by the jeweler's clerks, the charming mother faints, the baby cries, the truck driver declares loudly, "Say! Why, I could-a stopped that guy if I'd seen him a minute sooner!"

Outside on the street there are two or three more actors to help with the getaway. One distracts attention from the "heel man" and his real rôle by insisting that he saw a fellow run down another street. Another assures a pursuer, "It's all right—the cop on the next corner got him!" Still another is anxious to help capture the thief, and stops a pursuer to find out what he looked like. Along the real route taken for the getaway there will be one or two "direction chang-



## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

ers" who divert possible pursuers in harmless directions.

By one o'clock the drama is over, and the actors have disappeared in ways that arouse no suspicion. The truck driver is pursuing the thief down the street. The near-sighted customer is so shocked that he walks out forgetting that he was about to make a purchase. The maid soothes the baby, and the charming young matron regains consciousness, exclaims "Well, can you beat it!" and departs.

Ring down the curtain—the play has been a splendid success, but its run is over.

While the director casts, rehearses and produces such a play, the actual stage management is handed over to the heel man the moment action begins. This for the reason that it is he who takes the greatest chances, commits the most serious crime, and if caught and convicted, gets the longest sentence. His liberty may turn upon clever or careless acting by one member of the cast, so his interest in securing a perfect performance is easily understood.

Such a performance is sometimes staged in "pennyweighting," but as only a single article

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

can be taken by substitution, and the proceeds have to be split too many different ways, the drama is not so elaborate—box office receipts will not pay for the performance. The finder in this kind of thievery enters the store as a customer, examines a valuable piece of jewelry closely, and departs without purchasing. During his scrutiny he has made a careful mental picture of the article, so it can be reproduced in base metal and imitation jewels, and has given especial study to the price tag. This is only a tiny slip of cardboard, apparently insignificant, but it differs in each jewelry store in size, shape and color, and is often different in the same store for various kinds of jewelry. This tag must be duplicated so exactly that when the substitute article is put back in the tray by the jeweler he will not notice the difference.

Some years ago a notorious American woman pennyweighter, undertaking a job in the Burlington Arcade, London, was caught because the tag on the substitute article was salmon colored, where that on the real thing was yellow. A trifling mistake made by her finder, but it landed her in prison. I should have explained that two

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

different parties or mobs usually work in penny-weighting, one making the first visit to note the design and price tags, and the other making the actual substitution later when the first visitor has been forgotten.

These thieves cleverly use showmanship in disposing of their loot—nowadays almost entirely valuable jewels. By dramatizing the sale in various ways, they are not only able to avoid paying the heavy percentage demanded by a “fence” or receiver of stolen property, but will often actually get more money for a stolen article than was asked by the jewelry establishment that lost it.

For example: Scene, a beauty parlor. Enter Madame, maybe Mrs. Bootlegger, to have her hair permanently waved. Madame is no longer young, but the fact that she spends fifty or one hundred dollars on beauty indicates that she has money, and is getting it easy somewhere. She wears jewels, indicating that she is fond of them. The daylight jewel-wearing habit has greatly increased since Mr. Volstead’s amendment was annexed to our Constitution. Not only is she fond of them, but everywhere she

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

goes, the beauty parlor the Mah Jongg parties, the theater, the cabaret, it behooves her to wear larger and more expensive ones than her less fortunate sisters. The permanent waver—in most cases a man—smooth, oily, genteel, ingratiating, flattering, having gained Madame's confidence, mentions a bargain he knows about. One of his customers, short of cash, will sell a valuable ring or lavalère at a sacrifice. But—pst! there may be dropped a hint that the transaction is a little shady, the article stolen, for many otherwise honest citizens would much rather purchase jewelry from the "underworld," paying more than is asked in the shop, for the thrill of the thing. It is the same tang of adventure that makes otherwise law-abiding women enjoy smuggling a few articles past the custom officers.

Again, a glimpse of the underworld may stimulate buying interest and close a sale.

"Next time you come to New York," says the man-about-town to his friend in an inland bank or store, "I'd like to show you some interesting haunts off the beaten track." He explains that, having accidentally made the acquaintance of a



## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

crook who is a sort of king in the underworld, he often goes about on the inside, seeing how things are worked.

Next time the inland banker or merchant visits New York he is taken on what might be called a rubber-neck bus tour of criminal haunts, and sees crime committed purely for his own entertainment—"inside stuff," never dreamed of by regular New Yorkers. Thieves deftly relieve each other of valuables right before his eyes. In the course of the evening everybody is robbed, and nobody robbed. Like the "dens" of Chinatown, all staged for the sight-seer, the stranger seeing New York's wickedness views it largely through his own imagination, which makes of Leong and Hip Sing highbinders and tong slayers of peaceful Chinese restaurant keepers and waiters. After seeing with his own eyes how the article of jewelry offered him is obtained, he is pretty certain to purchase, if not in the belief that he is getting a bargain, then just for the adventure of it.

The romance of Chinatown has departed. The police put the skids under it. Practically every opium den shown to strangers was faked



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

up. American beauties from Mott, Doyer and Pell streets and from Chatham Square made a regular business of being depraved confirmed opium smokers for about two dollars a deprave. They were just planted in the "hop" joints until the uninitiated saw them actually lead their terrible lives with chinks. I remember a lot of society ladies visiting Chinatown with Prince Henry of Battenberg some years before the World War. I was their guide and escort. One of the society women, studying the supposed Irish-American wife of a Chinaman through her lorgnette, observed, "How could you live with this half-civilized Celestial?" The girl answered, "How can you be the wife of that old 'geezer' that's with you? Beat it back uptown where you come from, you rummies." The "geezer" was just an ordinary millionaire!

The inclination in certain quarters to purchase jewels and furs irregularly is astonishing. People who have made and are making unheard-of wealth—easy come, easy go money—themselves in many cases violators of the law, are the biggest customers of thieves. All thieves like to buy from each other, and there are quite a few

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

people who are not thieves, within-the-law citizens, who are always looking for bargains in the underworld.

The staging of a wire-tapping and gold-brick drama is much more elaborate, a piece of criminal theatricalism often approaching a Drury Lane melodrama in its wealth of characters and scenes. For it is a show that must convince a carefully chosen audience of one person—the victim.

Doubtless you have wondered, when reading newspaper accounts of experienced business men losing thousands of dollars in wire-tapping swindles, how such frauds, old as the Laurentian Hills, and described again and again in the public press, still make their successful appeal to human credulity.

“Oh, well, there’s a sucker born every minute!” you say to yourself, and turn to the comic strips.

It is commonly believed that such swindles are worked on “jays” of the “Rueben Glue” hayseed type, innocent of city ways. But the simple devices of the city bunco-steerer with the wondering visitor from the country are no longer effec-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

tive on a scale big enough to make them profitable—except possibly coin matching. Bunco-steering proper is now done chiefly among newly-arrived immigrants. They continue buying an interest in the Brooklyn Bridge or Grand Central Terminal, but the present-day wire-tapper needs a wholly different type of sucker for victim.

The ideal victim is one not green, because he must have enough business ability to have acquired sufficient money to make it profitable to "take" him. Keenness for money and shrewdness in bargaining are necessary in trimming him. These crooks look for the victim who wants to get fifty-to-one for his money, and is willing to be crooked himself for big game.

Finding the victim is the biggest part of the job. In New York and most of our large cities there are dealers in sucker lists who, in various ways, get knowledge of out-of-town people classable as "soft marks." They deal, not in the ordinary list containing thousands of names used by get-rich-quick promoters, but a sort of sucker list *de luxe*, comprising maybe but a few chosen persons about whom a great deal of information has been gathered and is still being gathered.

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

"Anybody ripe?" asks a swindler.

"Why, there's So-and-so," replies the sucker list specialist, describing some business man in an upstate city. He is one of the directors in the local bank, a well-to-do merchant, a pillar in the church. Always lived in that upstate town. Never had any fun or dissipation. Very close with his money—keen on making a big profit with a small investment. "Ripe" because the atmosphere of New York will intoxicate him, excite his greed, drug his business caution.

"All right—what do you want for So-and-so?" asks the swindler.

"You can have him for twenty bucks," agrees the dealer in suckers, who will later realize that he lamentably underestimated the value of this prospective victim.

Or the swindler may go afield looking for a victim. "Silk Hat Harry" turns up in, say, Scranton, Pennsylvania, registers at the best hotel as Franklin E. Turnbull of New York, strolls down the street and inserts an advertisement in the principal newspaper announcing that he is in Scranton seeking anthracite coal lands for a British syndicate. Probably dozens of interested



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

newspaper readers write or come to see him. Some have lands that are good, others worthless, but Mr. Turnbull is really seeking something else—an owner of coal lands who is well-to-do in available cash, and also of an over-reaching temperament when it comes to making money.

You must not imagine “Silk Hat Harry” as a crook in appearance or manner. On the contrary, he is a likable fellow, fully up to the part of agent for a big British syndicate, well supplied with credentials—has engraved cards and stationery, receives business correspondence from London, and is a gentleman, a seasoned man of affairs. And he lives on the scale of a gentleman, for the staging of a criminal drama like this, in which he is playing Prologue, is readily financed in New York to the extent of five or ten thousand dollars, if the criminal producer has a reputation for putting on successful shows.

Several weeks may pass before “Silk Hat Harry” finds a suitable victim. Various owners of coal lands have been investigated and found wanting—generally lacking money. Finally, the right person is located in, say, Elmer Elsworth Higginbottom, a general storekeeper in a nearby



## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

town, with a satisfactory commercial rating, mortgages on surrounding farms, and several hundred acres of coal land. He is a member of certain fraternal orders, a married man with children, of such-and-such lineage, and so forth—points about which it is important to get information for transmission to New York. Should it suddenly develop that Elmer is Scotch, for example, he would be quickly dropped for reasons connected with the well-known canniness of that race.

“Silk Hat Harry” impresses Mr. Higginbottom with the wealth of the British syndicate, and the gullibility of British promoters, who know little of American conditions. Elmer has already set upon his land a price per acre twice as much as it is really worth. “Silk Hat Harry” suggests that he hold out for a high price, and explains that he will expect a commission for helping him get it.

It seems to be a characteristic of the greedy man that he has an unshakable belief in his own judgment. Thinking he is smart enough to handle this deal himself, Elmer takes no one into his confidence, not even an attorney. “Silk Hat

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Harry" cleverly inflates him with a sense of his own importance, and stresses the idea that the fewer people he tells about this deal the better.

Suddenly Elmer's eagerness is brought to a fine edge with the news that Lord Culmbank, representing the British syndicate, has just arrived in New York, and may be persuaded to investigate this property himself. "Silk Hat Harry" calls up His Lordship's secretary on long distance and tactfully asks if His Lordship can grant an interview to Elmer and himself. The secretary has to consult the engagement book before answering. He replies that several other field agents have made appointments with His Lordship, but that it will be possible to grant an interview that day next week. "Silk Hat Harry" puts his hand over the receiver and whispers these various pieces of intelligence to Elmer, who scents competition in the sale of his land, and naturally becomes the more eager to get the deal going.

Thus, there is a week to put on the show. The cast includes His Lordship, with a wardrobe, accent and manner that fit the part absolutely.

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

Among my theatrical friends I know no better actor than "Paper Collar Joe," a famous pool-room swindler, now dead, who for years passed in New York's night life as a well-to-do Englishman of noble family, though he was actually identified with most of the notorious swindles of that day. There never was anybody like "Paper Collar Joe," either as a personality, or a stage director of criminal drama. I recall his chagrin and indignation when, in certain circumstances, he was identified mistakenly as the doortender of a gambling palace. "Me! the doortender in a roulette joint!" he said, dejectedly, as deeply wounded as though, a real British nobleman, somebody had mistaken him for a London commissioner.

His Lordship will need a secretary and a valet. He is to be interviewed at his apartment in an élite but quiet uptown hotel, so there must be some other callers. The second act of this drama will be set in a poolroom, and there must be bookmakers, betters and minor characters, not forgetting the villain who brings it to a climax and a close. This is the poolroom proprietor.

"His Lordship has been unexpectedly de-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

tained," explains Jarvis, the agitated secretary, hurrying down to meet Elmer and Harry in the lobby when they are announced—he wears a monocle, and is very English. "His Lordship deeply regrets the delay, and asks your pardon, and if you can be patient with him for not more than twenty minutes, will see you with pleasure."

When they reach his apartment, Lord Culmbank is everything an English nobleman ought to be—for a brief appearance. He does many characteristic things during a twenty-minute interview that are all very regular and natural, and works to make Elmer feel certain of selling his coal lands at twice their value, coming into considerable cold British cash, and therefore careless about money for the time being—that is, careless for him. Harry shows him how to bow to His Lordship. Jarvis and Jenkins, the valet, bow respectfully, so does "Silk Hat Harry," and Elmer does it, too, in a clumsy way. The effect is to create respect for the character who is going to talk about his coal lands. After acting a perfect little playlet, His Lordship asks Jarvis if all arrangements have been made for dinner



## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

that evening, announces that he will lie down for half an hour, instructs Jenkins to have his "bawth" ready. He dismisses Elmer, assuring him that everything seems to be satisfactory, and that he will turn the matter over to his solicitor for final adjustment. But he asks Harry to stop behind for a moment.

Remember that, besides the prospect of coming into considerable wealth in a few days, Elmer Elsworth Higginbottom has never been anywhere in particular, never had much excitement or fun, and certainly never been in the stimulating atmosphere of New York under such auspices. Most visitors to the city drop caution, let dull care go hang itself, and set out to live like people who have inhaled the rejuvenating gas of Mr. Wells' wandering comet. Mr. Higginbottom is given whiff after whiff of the concentrated stuff.

Something happened down in the hotel lobby while they were waiting to see Lord Culmbank—apparently a trivial incident, but really the main thread of the drama, the portent of coming loss for Elmer.

This was a chance meeting between "Silk Hat



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Harry" and a respectable fatherly gentleman in his early sixties—"Judge Glory," impersonated by "Silverfox" Gray. Fatherly, but not grandfatherly, a likable fellow, well informed about people and affairs, without paying particular attention to Elmer, he innoculates him with the idea that he has been taking his own years too seriously, and missing a lot of fun. Judge Glory knows a good many names in Jasper's section of the country, all carefully learned from Harry. He also approves Elmer's coal deal, saying that the English are grabbing the resources of this country, and that it is only fair to get as high a price as possible.

Elmer meets the Judge when he comes downstairs again, and as they chat, the latter's attention is attracted by a young man who enters the lobby.

"Now, I pride myself on my memory," the Judge says, "and I swear that young fellow over there is the son of my old friend Henry Rutherford, in Nyack."

The young man comes nearer, and the Judge finds that he is Henry Rutherford's son to his great delight, asks him what he is doing in New

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

York, and young Rutherford replies that he is getting on in business wonderfully.

“What kind of business are you in, Johnnie?”

“Why, Judge, I couldn’t tell you—for you’d tell my father,” says the youngster, hesitatingly.

Gradually it develops that Johnnie acts as messenger for certain parties who have advance information on horse races, and who make large sums daily by betting at the poolroom. Johnnie also bets a little himself. The Judge is horrified, and advises Johnnie to get out of that business immediately. But the boy insists that there is nothing wrong in it. Bookmakers are all crooked anyway. Beating them is no crime. Elmer gets interested, and suggests that they test the boy’s story by betting a small amount. “Silk Hat Harry” comes back. He agrees with the Judge that Johnnie shouldn’t be in such a business, but agrees with Johnnie that getting the better of poolroom gamblers is fair enough. Lord Culmbank denounces the game when they see him next day, but has to admit that the same thing is done in England, and in fact, wherever horse racing and gambling go on.

Well, to condense the action of this drama:

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Elmer and Harry eventually visit the poolroom, a fake establishment filled with alleged players. They hear bets entered for the Goulds, the Astors, Vanderbilts, Belmonts, and for several days win moderate wagers at conservative odds. Incidentally, they win without putting up much money, being taken for responsible sportsmen whose word is good, betting as charge customers of the poolroom.

Naturally, the ease of making a wager without putting up any money, and being paid their winnings in cash, has a further disintegrating effect upon Elmer's business caution.

Then comes a day when there is a fifteen-to-one shot, Johnnie brings advance information that "Zenobia" has won, and Elmer and Harry, acting on a prearranged plan, bet one thousand dollars each. You can picture the excitement of Higginbottom when the cashier starts to pay them each fifteen thousand dollars! And mind you, it is real money.

It is here that the villain of the piece steps in—the poolroom proprietor, who is a truly hard guy.

"What is this transaction?" he demands of the

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

cashier. "Did these gentlemen put up their own money in wagering? How do we know they have that much money? Don't pay the bet until they show an amount equal to the wager."

The cashier half takes the betters' side. Says the men are respectable, that he has known Turnbull, "Silk Hat Harry," for years, that they have plenty of money. But the proprietor is now angrier than ever, and calls his cashier an easy mark.

"The next thing I know you'll be giving away our whole bank roll to business bums like these. Do what I order you to do! If you don't, quit the window, and I'll put Sonny Marks in your place."

The cashier is livid at these insults by the boss. Johnnie takes a hand, whispering to Harry and Higginbottom to go and get a good bank roll, and be ready for a big winning on a sure thing in a day or two. They'll show up this burly, loud-mouthed, black-leg poolroom keeper when they clean up on the "old first-past-the-post info," when they get the name of the actual winner minutes before the poolroom keeper gets it.

"He'll sweat when he gets a good trim-



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

ming," Johnnie says. "The dirty skunk! And I brought you in here to be treated like that!"

Not only have they the big money they are going to win in prospect, but revenge, oh, sweet revenge! Harry gets his \$10,000. Elmer goes back home and draws his out of the bank in cash. They both come back and bet on the sure thing on the day Johnnie gives it to them. It loses. They cast Elmer out. He returns home a sadder but wiser coal-land owner.

What do most people seek in the theater? Why, adventure, romance, something that takes them out of their own lives.

The impresario of criminal drama knows this so well, that the appeal to the universal love of adventure is seldom left out of his show. The bait is there for greed, and flattery for the sucker's confidence in his own shrewdness, but no matter how cautious, old and drab the victim may be, the adventure appeal is there too, and in the form of the ready-made adventure people find in the theater and movies. The only difference in the criminal drama is that the audience of one himself participates in the show, and pays for the whole production.



## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

There was "Hey-Rube Skelly," now dead, a famous finder for the wire-tapping game in his day.

"Well, sir, this is my last trip for a good many months," he would announce to the prospective victim, a perfect stranger, met "accidentally" on a train coming into New York. "I go right from New York to Africy and Indy to buy animals for the Ringling circus."

Can you put together in that many words a statement with more appeal to curiosity and the love of adventure? Going to Africa and India to get circus animals! Nobody too old, short of second childhood, to want to know more about that!

The bluff, humorous circus man, whose every utterance takes the listener into a colorful world, who knows nothing of business or routine work, and says nothing about money—what more natural than his telling the chance acquaintance something about his daughter in New York, and her husband, the telegraph operator, who has charge of the race-track wires downtown in the Western Union, and makes a good deal of money besides his salary by placing bets after he

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

knows the real winner, before word has reached the poolrooms? In New York, he and the victim see a good deal of each other for several days, viewing the sights. Little is said about the telegrapher son-in-law, but the victim's mind comes back to him again and again. Finally, Skelly is persuaded to take him downtown and introduce him to the son-in-law, who comes out of a room full of clicking telegraph instruments, in shirt sleeves, with a green shade over his eyes, tells them he is not supposed to see visitors during working hours, nor have they any right to be in that part of the building. He is obstinate in his refusal to let the victim have word of a good winner. Why, if he did such a thing, and it became known, he'd lose his job!

Drama again—staged in real life and cleverly fitted into the characters, actions, desire and weaknesses of everyday people.

There is the gold-brick drama, with the miner and Indian who have several bars of gold they cannot sell openly for certain reasons, and are therefore willing to dispose of it at nominal value. A specimen bar is shown the victim, and

## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

the three go to a local jeweler, who drills into a plug of real gold at a certain point on the bar, declares it genuine, but declines to give an opinion as to value. However, a representative of the United States Assay Office happens to be stopping at one of the hotels, and after a search he finds and gives them the assayer's card. The assayer is also one of the crooks. He tests the brick, weighs it, and advises the victim to buy it as a great bargain. The brick turns out to be gold-plated brass. The crime is as old as the hills, and is described over and over again in the newspapers, but still finds victims.

The greatest impersonations in the gold brick game are of the miner and the Indian. The miner must be an old fellow, streaked gray whiskers, grub-stake blue eyes, illiterate; "that thar" western dialect. Dressed in black with a blue shirt and double side heavy watch chain with a hunting case Elgin hooked to it. "Fond of likker, by cracky, and out for sportin'." The Indian is so wild he can't sleep indoors. Stays in the woods. Don't trust white man, no how. The miner has to talk to him from a distance. Can you imagine one of these oily genteel con

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

men from Broadway out doing a stunt like this, and the fun they have after it is all over?

Every crime has to be stage-directed. The recent double murder and \$48,000 West End Bank robbery was located by a finder and tipped off to the holdup men and murderers. The finder, an amateur beginner in crime, was double-crossed, did not get a cent. The murderers double-crossed the middlemen and chauffeur.

How often have we read and heard of "Black Bart"? He was his own stage manager, director and troupe in his many holdups of stages in the Sierras of California from 1877 to 1883. He seldom robbed passengers, was affable to the ladies, and usually departed with the treasure box or safe of the Wells Fargo Express Company. Gold shipments were his game. He "stuck up" twenty-three stages in his time. When he located the place he intended to do the "stick up," he would plant behind a clump of bushes eight or ten sticks about six feet tall, and put black slouch hats on the sticks. These hats would just peer over the brush. Bart pretended they were his "stand-by" men. "Stay where you are boys," he would say to the black hats, "don't



## STAGE MANAGEMENT OF CRIME

shoot or make a move till I give you orders; but keep your eyes on them until they're out of sight." Every victim always thought the black hats on the sticks were part of Black Bart's gang. A linen cuff that he carelessly left behind in a camp resulted in his arrest by the police of San Francisco, where he was known as Charles E. Benton and Charles E. Bowles. He lived in an unpretentious boarding house, posed as a mining man and was never suspected as a holdup. He was originally from Decatur, Illinois, served three years as a soldier in the Union Army, was a teetotaler, led a respectable life, a man of fine education and a good story-teller. He never took a life or injured a human being.

"Chief, what is the real cure for crime?" a good many people have asked me.

I can tell you in a dozen words: stop the manufacture as well as the sale of firearms. Just as the crime of nation against nation, like war, is made possible by armament, the tools of force, so the crimes of individuals against property and against others are facilitated by firearms—personal armament.

Go over the day's criminal calendar and you



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

will find that much wrongdoing would be impossible without firearms. Stopping the sale and making it a criminal offense to possess firearms unlawfully is not enough—stop manufacture.

And in studying crime from this viewpoint of its stage management, I have sometimes wondered how much wrongdoing would be impossible if acting and stage management could be prohibited to criminals by some form of law. Of course, the thing is impossible, and the suggestion perhaps fantastic. Yet every one of the time-worn swindles depends upon stage effects, and many of the crimes against property. Like the playwright, story-tellers, and moving pictures directors, the criminal works by suggesting to his victim "let's pretend," and his success is based upon the instinct of people everywhere for make-believe.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

THE third degree method of enforcing confessions from prisoners suspected of crimes is as old as the world. It was practiced for many hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, and has continued down through the centuries ever since. One of the greatest third degree artists known to the world's history was Nero. Spanish Inquisition methods, consisting of the most barbaric tortures, application of red-hot irons to the body, forcing suspects to drink melted metals, etc., are matters of history. In the Tower of London, in civilized England, there is still on exhibition an instrument or machine which was used to extract confessions, the greatest third degree machine I have ever seen. The victim's feet were fastened to one end of the machine, his hands to the other, and by a system of cranking, his body was gradually pulled apart. If he was asked a question and refused satisfac-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

torily to reply to it, the machine would be put in operation and gradually stretched his upper and lower limbs. This was continued until it became so painful that the victim usually confessed, whether innocent or guilty. In many instances the tortures inflicted upon the prisoner were so severe that he frequently confessed to the crime he was charged with, although innocent of it.

In ancient days it was customary to place in various public positions information boxes, so constructed that whatever was deposited could not be removed except by the collector. A citizen who possessed information incriminating any one, or who for any reason desired to anonymously injure any person, could secretly deposit in these public information boxes accusations which invariably resulted in arrest, detention and inquisition.

In the Doge's Palace in Venice, where the information box system was for years in vogue, every known method of torture was used to extract confessions from the accused. These boxes are modeled after a lion's head, which is part of the emblem of St. Mark, the informations were inserted by conspirators and false ac-

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

cusers in the lion's mouth, and dropped to a considerable depth, so that they could not be stealthily removed by any one. Although most of the accusations were anonymous, the accused was nevertheless immediately arrested, and efforts made to extort confessions from him, and whether innocent or guilty, he was punished according to the humor of the Doge who tried him. If the accused had money, all of it was taken from him, or one ear would be ordered severed, or a sentence of imprisonment given in a dungeon underneath the palace. Sometimes, in extreme cases, the accused would be beheaded, weights fastened to his body, and he was slid from the dungeon into the canal. The guillotine and door leading to the canal through which the dead bodies were slid are still in evidence, and recently seen by me, while in Venice.

No matter where one travels, in any part of the world, there are always exhibited instruments of torture which were used to extract confessions from the accused. It seems to be a mania with some public officials, especially in Europe, to exhibit and explain these various machines of torture. In Germany, every place I went they in-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

sisted on showing me the ax used to behead murderers, and the block to which the murderer was strapped to be beheaded. In France they delight in showing the guillotine. There is no place in the world that the guillotine has been used as frequently as there. Practically every execution in France is a public one, outside of the court house or prison. Any one who rises early enough can witness a beheading.

Parents of the lower type—hot-tempered, senseless fathers and mothers—are in many cases the originators of the passionate, infuriated third degree upon their offspring. The son has been suspected of untruthfulness or the commission of a crime. He is summoned to a room alone by the father, who begins his examination by slapping or punching the boy in the face “to take the nerve out of him.” “If you don’t tell me the truth, it’s more of that you’ll get, and plenty more,” shouts the father. “I’ll beat you within an inch of your life.” The lad confesses. Most times he is guilty, but sometimes innocent, and confesses to avoid further thrashing. The same occurs with the mother and daughter. Consequently, some officers of the law resorted



## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

to these practices with similar results, only the assaults were usually more ferocious, administered on the body where they would not be observed.

As civilization advances, the third degree decreases. Not many years ago, in the larger police departments of the world, prisoners were abused and ill-treated in the effort to secure confessions from them. In murder cases, the suspect was forced to remain for a long period in a room in the presence of the deceased, or blood from the body of the deceased, or part of the clothing of the deceased, were put on or near the person of the accused, in the effort to extract a confession. Various other kinds of tortures were resorted to.

There is no more cowardly practice than that of endeavoring to force a confession by assault or any other torturous methods from a prisoner after he is under arrest charged with crime, because he is practically defenseless. In this age, the practice is prohibited.

The inquisitor should be fairly certain, from all the facts and circumstances surrounding a crime, that the defendant is guilty of it or has a

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

guilty knowledge of it, before accusing him. The law must be served, but brutal methods are not justifiable. It is most atrocious to accuse an innocent person of a crime. In fact, this sort of performance seldom occurs except by amateur, conscienceless examiners, or by inflated police officials, devoid of reasoning power. I recall a type of this kind who accused nearly every person arraigned before him of committing many crimes the prisoner was not concerned in, and no matter what the person's nationality, always wound up by calling him a Jew.

It was not an uncommon occurrence with some public officials in years gone by to endeavor to procure confessions by assaulting and abusing prisoners. This was particularly so in crimes of violence, or where policemen or detectives were murdered, mortally wounded or assaulted in the performance of their duty. These assaults upon prisoners were usually made by subordinates, to curry favor with their superiors, but the practice during the last decade has been discontinued, because in many instances the prisoners revealed what transpired, and because the methods to obtain confessions are now intelligently conducted.

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

In the larger cities, if the prisoner has a previous criminal record, it is soon discovered from the fingerprints and Bertillon measurements. In the morning he goes to the "line up," and is placed on a stage in the presence of hundreds of masked detectives. The details of the crime he is arrested for, when and where, and his criminal record, are announced. The assembled detectives are asked if any of them recognize the prisoner. Up goes a hand. The masked detective announces what he knows about the prisoner. Up goes another, and so on until he is disposed of. Having a number of masked "bulls" giving the prisoner the "once over," and telling what they know about him, tends to diminish his courage. Besides, being under arrest is a mighty uncomfortable position to be in, especially if guilty of a crime. Human nature is pretty sturdy, but a pair of steel bracelets removes a lot of the romance from the average criminal. The arrest, the handcuffs, a night in a cell and the line up, have their peculiar effect on the prisoner's nerve—if he is guilty. He is a good subject to work on just after he comes from the line up, or after he is held by the magistrate. He begins to

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

see the "handwriting on the wall." If innocent, it doesn't even phase him.

Nowadays, the prisoner is informed of his rights, and told that any statement made by him of an incriminating nature can be used against him as evidence. His statements are taken by a stenographer in the presence of other witnesses.

There are few cases, if any, in past years that resulted in conviction where the confession was irregularly obtained. The present-day third degree is more or less a battle of wits between the inquisitor and the accused. Lasting sometimes for a long period, and frequently a test between a strong-willed, clear-headed, powerful police official and a weak-minded prisoner, it often results in the accused confessing to the crime when he did not commit it. There are innumerable cases where, under severe examination, defendants have, because of criminal vanity and exhaustive questioning, acknowledged crimes they were not concerned in.

Sometimes the most severe and bullying methods of cross-examination are resorted to, and fail. Psychology plays a very important part in the detection of crime, the examination of sus-



## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

pects and the procuring of confessions. Severe methods may get results from one individual where they will fail with another.

I have always found the pugnacious or rough-neck type more susceptible to sympathetic treatment than to severity. The timid or weaker type of prisoner is most susceptible to severity. The slightest touch of human nature, commonly known as "sob methods," frequently results in the procuring of confessions from prisoners or suspects when everything else fails. Abuse and violence simply shut the criminal up, though sometimes the timid or weaker type is susceptible to severity. A very little sympathy, fairness and understanding of human nature, on the other hand, will often get straight to a criminal's heart, leading him to volunteer important information, or become useful as an informant. We must, however, never overlook the fact that a criminal is a criminal—in many instances a dangerous enemy of law and order. He must not be pampered. The desperate violator of the law, ready to kill at a moment's notice, should be given no quarter. The same may be said of those evading arrest, planning and escaping from



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

prisons. It is better to kill a dozen desperate criminals than to forfeit the life of one defender of the law. The criminal should always be kept in his place until he shows some signs of reformation—and then be sure they are genuine, and not faked.

My success in getting confessions from all types of criminals, the accidental one, the professional, the hardened, has been due to always controlling my temper, satisfying the defendant of my absolute fairness, using sensible, humane methods, beginning with matter-of-fact examination, always looking for weaknesses, carefully studying the defendant's eyes, mouth, nose, chin, hands, voice and handwriting without his knowing I was doing so, and also leading him to believe, by my methods, I was inexpert as an examiner. The criminal is cunning and deceitful. He must be met with his own weapons.

Eventually talking his own language to him, I always begin with the best of English, slowly spoken. If he uses the vernacular, I use it. Sometimes he is more comfortable with it. It is difficult to obtain a confession with a third person present. A prisoner is much more likely to

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

“talk” (confess) if alone with his examiner, because he has more confidence. His eyes tell more than any other feature. They squint and shift in the guilty, dodge straight searching glances. The ears redden. The mouth is also a great indicator. Excitement attending an examination, especially in the guilty, causes nervousness in the stomach and complete dryness in the mouth. Painful thirstiness weakens the voice. The hands and feet of the guilty are restless. The average prisoner about to confess craves water—a cigarette—relief. If he is given them, he gets his second wind, and doesn’t take the count—he is up fresh again, battling for himself.

Clearly understand that I am no believer in “kid glove” methods of examining criminals, but the humane examination, skillfully and rigorously pursued, can be far more effective than bullying, violence, mental or bodily torture.

The first step in the humane examination of a suspect is to get his confidence. With one type—and I am glad to say that it is by far the most common—this can be done by direct assurance that nothing but honorable methods will be used,

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

no broken promises, no unfair advantage taken, all the prisoner's legal rights respected. I never argue with or belittle the defendant, but get his confidence because he believes in me, doing everything I can to help him, if he helps me.

Nearly always, in beginning the examination, I ask simple routine questions. "What is your name? How old are you? Where do you live? Have you a father living—mother—brothers or sisters? What is your religion? Have you gone to church lately? Please let me have a sample of your handwriting—write your name and address. Make some capital letters. Write some figures."

These preliminaries have a curiously different effect on two different types of persons.

To the one who is an accessory to, or guilty of, a crime, but has decent instincts, and is afraid of brutal treatment by accomplices, and the innocent person with or without information bearing on crime, it is a demonstration that humane methods are to be used, and that the examiner is not trying to trap him, but simply working to get at the truth. This sort of type will generally respond and do all he can to help.

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

But another type of prisoner, suspicious, alert, with something to conceal, seeing me write down the answers to these apparently harmless questions, taking plenty of time, and doing it a little ponderously, jumps to the conclusion, pleasing to him, that I am harmless, evidently some country magistrate substituting for the real examiner, who is probably away on his vacation. He finds my questions easy to answer without danger of involving himself. He inwardly breathes a sigh of relief, relaxes, and begins figuring how to "put it over" on me.

These questions open up a field of inquiry that often proves most fruitful. After the suspect has given information about his identity, home, relatives and recent movements, it can be checked up by his dialect and examination of his clothing. Dialects are a fascinating study: eastern from western; southern from northern; one state from another; one city from another; one country from another. I take up his hat and look for a name, or initials, or the hat dealer's name and address. The name in the hat may be different from the one he has given me. Or he says he has lived the past five years in New York,



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

while his hat, fairly new, bears the name of a San Francisco merchant. Other pertinent information may be found on the tailor's label in the inner coat pocket, on the strap by which the coat is hung, the trousers waist-band, laundry marks and so forth. Almost invariably he will have some kind of papers—the world of crime needs its instructions and records just as much as the world of business, and thieves, particularly, have a weakness for memoranda. When papers are discovered, he does not recognize them—didn't know he had them—somebody must have stuck them in his pocket. But his writing can be compared with the documents found on him, and often is identical.

These "silent perplexities" frequently bring out facts of the utmost importance. They can be elaborated in many ways, and are most disconcerting to a suspect in the humane examination. By prearrangement—staging—and the use of suitable types of people, the door opens while the suspect is answering questions, and an assistant brings in a strange woman. The examiner reprimands him sharply, saying "Why did you bring her in here before I gave the signal—you



## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

know I'm not ready for her yet!" A detective or uniformed officer reports having arrested another suspect in the case, and is told to bring his prisoner back later. A secretary opens the door and announces, "That party is on your private wire, Commissioner," and the examiner holds a conversation with some one who apparently has important information to disclose bearing on the case. A pretended meeting may be arranged over the 'phone, or the examiner thanks the mysterious party at the other end for information, saying, "Yes—I have evidence corroborating that." The suspect comes to the conclusion that you are an awful sucker for talking before him, and at the same time gets a purposely exaggerated idea of information you may have about him or his crime.

The preliminary examination of routine questions also opens up the vast field of the suspect's family, past life, associations—the people and things he cares about.

"Do you mean to tell me, that you, raised in such-and-such a faith, or with a mother (or a wife and children) would do a thing like that?" When you strike into this part of a suspect's life,

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

you touch him very closely, if he has retained any decency or conscience.

To the experienced examiner, the person under investigation begins to tell important facts almost before he or she has spoken.

The study of handwriting is of the utmost significance, provided the examiner has had experience in this field. As "central" on all bank forgeries for thirteen years, I have lived twenty-four hours a day with specimens of handwriting.

There is, among detectives, something known as the "murderer's eye." It is impossible to describe what it is, and I do not expect the reader to take my word for it that an experienced examiner can detect it in a suspect, any more than I should expect a court of law to accept, as proof, my assertion that a given person was a murderer because he had this "murderer's eye." Murder is the worst word in the English language. It implies a dastardly, cowardly act—to assassinate, to kill, to slay a human being, frequently with malice aforethought, or premeditation. So hideous and serious is the crime that the perpetrator often aids in his own detection. Hardened as he may be in all other crimes, murder

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

sets its mark so effectively upon the perpetrator that detection is almost inevitable. It is possible for a murderer to harden himself to the crime if repeated. His first slaying has the worst effect upon him. Committing the second, and following it up with others, tends to eliminate fear. He becomes accustomed to his work, and gradually hardens to it—fascinated with the desire to continue to kill. But the first slaying shows in an indescribable expression of guilt in the eye. I have examined many prisoners charged with all kinds of murder, and could satisfy myself where there was no direct evidence as to the innocence or guilt of the suspect by a careful study of the eye. It is an expression of guilt, with fear of detection behind it, and can be seen, with practice, if the examiner is alertly watching for it. Many times people are suspected of murder who may have a guilty knowledge of crime, but are not participators therein. They, too, have the guilty eye, but it cannot be seen in the eye of the innocent, no matter how many guilty circumstances may surround him.

One of the first traits to be looked for in examination is criminal vanity. It plays a most

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

important part in securing information and confessions. Many amateur and accidental criminals, as well as the hardened professional, are so vain of their talent and their work that they are eager to talk about them. It is not unusual to find, as the motive for crime, that the criminal, having established a reputation as a clever thief or a daring holdup man, committed further crimes in his line to maintain that reputation. The murderer Sage, who recently killed two policemen in Jersey City, declared after his arrest that he had the reputation of being a "tough guy" and had to live up to it. Newspaper notoriety secured by criminals works against law and order, and also for it. Against, by giving criminals the dubious glory that feeds their vanity, and on the side of the law, by aiding the examiner in playing upon that weakness.

The examiner utilizes this vanity in such cases as one in which a single member of a "mob" was caught under incriminating circumstances and refused to talk, saying he would do his bit and protect his pals. Proud of his reputation, he was open to the suggestion that the rest of the mob were giving him the "horse laugh" for being



## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

caught while they went free. This suggestion so played upon his vanity in a few days that he gave information leading to the arrest and conviction of his accomplices, saying: "They will give me the laugh, will they! Well, when you bring them in here, we'll see who does the laughing!"

The criminal who has operated with others, and is arrested, hates to "go the route" alone. He knows his pals are as guilty as he is, that they are laughing at his hard luck. After arrest, he gets suspicious of a "tip off" by some one. Who? Maybe it was Mike, "Cinders" or "Darbo." "They have as much right to be here as I have." He gives them up gleefully, but with a promise that he's not to be known as a squealer.

There is some honor among thieves—but it can be put in a small-size thimble.

Take six honest persons, six dishonest persons who have never been convicted of crime, and six criminals who have served prison terms. Let them all be of the same general build and type. Without experience, few people could distinguish the three different groups, but the detective frequently sorts them, and as correctly as a mail-handler slipping so many letters into the right



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

boxes. The ex-convicts would be sorted first by the marks left upon them by prison, and next the dishonest suspects who bear their marks, too, made by suspicion, fear, and the sense of guilt.

While in the police department in New York City as a Deputy Commissioner and Chief of Detectives, I could, when a prisoner was arraigned before me, without any previous information on the subject, tell for what crime he was arrested.

Years ago, another young detective and I, detailed at large gatherings, on presidential tours, big conventions, etc., in various cities, used to pride ourselves, actually vie with each other, on picking up thieves we had never previously known. This is a proposition one cannot make a mistake in. Like Davy Crockett, you must be sure you are right, then nail them. Many a new one we picked up. Some Frenchman, Italians and Englishmen unknown in this country. This is called "smelling 'em out."

In one city, there had been a lot of complaints of "big touches from the person" by a pick-pocket. The chief of police admonished all the "coppers" on the job for not getting this clever bird. I picked a fellow up who looked wrong.

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

It was on a Saturday. He protested too much about his arrest—what it was going to cost me for false arrest, and so forth. By way of kidding him I asked,

“What is your regular occupation?”

“I work in Smith’s grocery store,” he replied. I took off his straw hat. It had a Niagara Falls label—the pickpockets’ paradise. Saturday was indeed a bad day for “Dapper Dan” to be away from the grocery store on pleasure bent. He turned out to be an AA thief—with two previous convictions—and confessed to all the thefts reported. Three years’ absence from society was his prescription by the judge. “And I’d like to give you ten if I could by the law. You robbed my brother-in-law, Dan Brady, the contractor,” was the judge’s parting shot.

My first experience as a confession-getter occurred quite a few years ago in New England. A series of masked burglaries at night time had been committed in a well-to-do summer residence section, terrorizing that neighborhood. They had extended over several months, with no trace of the criminals or the loot. Working as a young Pinkerton operative, I had traced some

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

of the property and finally came to the conclusion that the criminals were already in prison, having been arrested and sentenced for another crime.

When I turned up at the prison and told the warden I had come to try to get a confession from these convicts, and recover some of the property, if possible, he looked at his somewhat boyish visitor with amusement and scepticism.

"Why, my lad, Inspector So-and-so of New York has been here and put these fellows through a five-hour examination, and he didn't get a single thing out of them. And Commissioner Such-and-such had no better luck. What do you think you can do?"

This put me in the position of having to plead with the warden to see my suspects at all. Fortunately, he was a kindly man, and said:

"Well, it would look bad if you had to go back and tell your principals you didn't even talk with the men. So I'll let you see them, to save your face."

The convicts, one at a time, were brought to me in the counsel's room. An hour later I asked the warden to come in and be present at the

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

taking of a confession. He was astounded, and also eager to know what occult kind of "third degree" I had used—what subtle resources of terror or torture I had up my sleeve.

My method with the two convicts was entirely humane, and I may say that, having been a detective during the greater part of my career, humane examination of suspects and criminals would have been forced upon me, even though I were disposed to use rough methods, which are utterly abhorrent to me temperamentally—and besides, not effective police measures.

When each convict was brought in, I asked him to be seated and instead of asking questions, or trying to break down his stubborn resistance, or laying verbal traps, I painted a picture, from the standpoint of the victims, of the crimes they were suspected of having committed.

"I won't ask whether you did commit these robberies, or whether you didn't. But I will ask you to consider the other side. Picture to yourself that peaceful neighborhood where nobody now goes to bed at night feeling secure. Every woman and every little child lives in fear. Every sound alarms and frightens."



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

After elaborating this picture so he saw it clearly in his mind, and felt it, I presented the situation from another angle:

“Think what a wonderful thing it would be for that community to know that the robbers are not only in prison, where they need no longer be feared, but that one of them has revealed all the facts.”

This was elaborated, in turn, and led up to what a salesman would call the “closing.”

“I know what you are thinking about—you are asking yourselves: ‘What good would such a confession do me, a convict here in prison?’ I can’t promise you any immunity. But think of the possible influence of those people upon your sentence. You’re in for twenty years. If you did commit those robberies, and make some amends by restoring the peace of mind of those people—some of the most influential citizens in the state—do you suppose it is going to work to your disadvantage? No, you know that if it has any effect upon you at all, it will be good, for the shortening of your term.

“You astonish me,” the holdup answered. “Other officers have tried to get information



## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

from us by threats, saying that if we didn't 'come clean' on these jobs they would fasten other crimes upon us, jobs we had no connection with, and piling up warrants and charges against us, keep us in prison the rest of our lives. Every question they asked, and their whole attitude, simply antagonized us and made us stubborn. You put things in a different way, and I see the advantage of doing what you want me to."

It happened, in that case, that the other man could not confess, though he saw that it was the politic thing to do. For he had many relatives, some involved in crime, and others entirely innocent, who would have been harmed in many ways by his confession. But the confessor was not involved in that way, and not so deeply involved in the robbery. He was free to confess, and his confession accomplished every desired purpose. People in the terrorized community were reassured, considerable stolen property was recovered, and the confession actually did what I had suggested as a possibility—shortened these convicts' sentences.

Some years ago a trunk containing the mutilated body of a woman was found floating in a

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Connecticut lake. Several months of patient investigation made it certain, short of the necessary evidence, that the crime had been committed by an Italian, the victim's husband. He was arrested in Buffalo, and brought to me for examination in New York.

Our tracing of various clues and persons had involved the location of two young men and two young women, nephews and nieces of the murderer, who had lived with him until after the crime was committed, and then returned to Italy. Italian police officials arrested and examined these young people on the other side. They were innocent, but gave important information, which was sent us. Each sheet of the Italian report bore the royal arms of the King of Italy.

The suspected murderer spoke no English. He was an Italian peasant, accustomed to authority. When they brought him into my office I arose, placed a chair for him myself, and told the interpreter to ask him to sit down. This made a great impression upon him. Through the interpreter I explained his legal rights, told him he would have the assistance of an attorney, and then spread out the report of the Italian police,

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

with the King's coat of arms. This was a conquer. I let him read it. He took from his vest pocket a piece of paper, unwrapped a rosary, knelt before the coat of arms, and crossed himself. Then he rose and made a full confession through the interpreter.

His wife had run away from him in Italy, taking his money, and come to this country with another man, with whom she lived. He followed, persuaded her to live with him again, and forgave her. But she proved unfaithful a second time, and one night, coming home, he told her that he had discovered it. She spat in his face, an insult so maddening to a Latin that he murdered her in a frenzy. Long after she was dead from strangulation by his bare hands, he got a hammer and wire nails and drove the latter into her brain.

"That is the whole truth, Excellency," he concluded, "I do not care what happens to me. You may now take me away to be electrocuted. But what a pleasure, what a privilege, to come here and confess to some one like you!"

But the best results are secured where the examiner takes the suspect's side of the case. In

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

the notorious Rosenthal murder, some years ago, he, a New York gambler, was shot down in the theater district by gunmen who sped away in an automobile.

One of the first suspects I examined was a chauffeur named Libby, who was identified by several witnesses of the shooting as the man who had driven the car when the crime was committed. Libby did not seem to be worried by this evidence against him, and I had reasons to believe that he had taken the car from a garage, turned it over to another driver, and taken it back to the garage after the crime.

Who was that other driver? Libby knew, but he would not tell.

So I sought further information by going over to his side of the case, virtually becoming his attorney.

"You do not realize how serious the evidence of these witnesses will be if you are tried in court," I said. "To show what you would really be up against, I'm going to call the witnesses in one by one, and question them in your presence, just as though I were the prosecuting attorney, and you were on trial."



## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

This was done with such dramatic effect that Libby's confidence vanished. The very first witness made statements that would have convicted him. An especially serious phase of his case was, that none of the people employed at the garage where the car was kept spoke English, being French and Italian. The upshot of it was, that Libby revealed the real driver of the murder car, Shapiro. Later Libby went free. Had he been involved, his assistance to the state would have lightened his sentence.

This particular case furnishes proof of the effectiveness of feeding your suspect, something in which I have always been a great believer. By "feeding" I do not mean any mystery of examination, but simply a warm, hearty meal. The murder had occurred at two o'clock in the morning. Prisoners, witnesses and detectives had been kept at an uptown police station until six o'clock in the morning. Four hours of excitement, questioning and sleeplessness without refreshment had made everybody tired. I saw that we were all in the wrong mood, and also in the wrong place.

"Let's drop everything, go out and get a good



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

breakfast, and continue this inquiry in my own office, at police headquarters where we will be more comfortable," I said, and everybody went with me to a nearby restaurant, and there were no jaded appetites in that crowd—I know, because I paid all the checks. The very first thing that happened when we began again in my office was Libby's disclosure.

One day I was summoned hurriedly to a Brooklyn apartment. There murdered, each shot through the heart, were three generations of a family all piled on top of each other—mother, daughter, daughter's daughter. A few hours intense investigation indicated the crime had been committed by the eldest woman's son, brother and uncle to the other two. It was hours before we found him, at one o'clock the next morning. He was an Italian, very dogged and stubborn. Everybody tried all night long to get a confession out of him. His brother-in-law, the husband of his murdered sister, and father of the dead child, prayed with him. He cried and moaned. We stuck to him till daylight. He did not speak much English, and all the examinations were through Italian detectives.

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

They are sometimes temperamental and threatening to their own race.

John J. Coughlin, the present excellent Inspector of New York City detectives, was with me. Laughingly, I said to the Inspector about 7 A. M., "Let's feed the brute!"

"Good idea," said the always jovial Inspector. We fed him—plenty and then some. He liked me best for the food, and confessed with his stomach full to the triple murder. He was electrocuted.

Another illustration of what may be done by taking the suspect's side of the case and helping him:

An especially vexing series of forgeries had been perpetrated on eastern banks. We got several of the presenters, criminals who had cashed fraudulent documents, but could not get evidence to convict the "scratcher," or actual forger, one of the cleverest penmen in the business, though we knew that he was implicated—was the man doing the work. Arresting and convicting his accomplices did little good in stopping the crime as long as he was at liberty and able to work. Finally, we arrested a presenter

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

who, while he had done twelve years in prison, had lived a decent life since his release. He was married, had children, and had gone straight as a string except for this single lapse. He had done the job under great temptation, was sincerely sorry for it, and I felt sincerely sorry for him.

I said to him, "Jim, I'm going to take the biggest possible chance with you, and give you the greatest chance you've ever had."

"What do you mean, Chief?"

"Let you go free and get 'The Penman' for me." That was the forger. "I'm giving you a chance to help yourself. If you can stand him up for me, it means your own liberty and a decent life with your family. I'm going to let you out. There will be people close to you. I want you to bring 'The Penman' to a certain park for a talk. When you're there, we'll arrest you both."

This program was faithfully carried out by Jim. Both men were covered by shadows with instructions to shoot if anything went wrong. The Penman did not know me. When he and Jim sat down to talk in the park, to escape lis-

## THE HUMANE THIRD DEGREE

teners, I walked over to the bench on which they sat and took a seat beside "The Penman." Detectives quietly seized and searched him, and found enough specimens for evidence to convict.

We had a humane third degree right there on the park bench, and it was so quiet that young couples wooed and children played a dozen feet away. I showed "The Penman" two alternatives: he could come down to headquarters with me, give information that would lead to the breaking up of his mob and his going to the penitentiary, or he could be taken forcibly. If he went the quiet way, so much the better. "The Penman" got a long sentence. Jim went to the penitentiary for a few months. The rest of the outfit got suitable terms.

It is a great satisfaction to the police to procure confessions from persons suspected of crimes; because they not only clear up the crime they are charged with, but frequently clear up many other cases, implicate accomplices and assist in the recovery of stolen property. Confessions are always attacked by the defendant's attorney, who claims his client was coerced, forced or assaulted until he confessed to the

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

crime. It is an old-time defense—questioning the integrity of the police.

The bench, jurors and the public are becoming more and more suspicious every day of confessions procured as a result of severe interrogation and examination. These points the police are beginning to understand better, and the methods employed to procure admission from the accused are humane ones. The cruel third degree is a thing of yesterday.



## CHAPTER V

### BLACKMAIL—A DIFFICULT SUBJECT

“**I**’LL tell, if you don’t come across and settle!” is the blackmailer’s creed.

Blackmail is a difficult subject to write about for decent readers because, nine times in ten, it turns upon lapses in sexual morality.

I don’t know whether sex was invented, evolved, or ordained. But it certainly started something in human affairs, and among other things the crime of blackmail, which without doubt sprang into existence the day after.

The lapses from clean living upon which the blackmailer works to extort money from his victims may range all the way from the chronic profligacy of a rich idle person to a single indiscretion by an otherwise clean-living person.

I am writing of this crime partly for the protection of victims of the latter class, and those who may be innocent victims, and also because the handling of blackmail cases is a specialty,

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

calling for peculiar knowledge. A victim of blackmail will generally be helpless unless he knows where to turn for assistance in extricating himself.

As for the rich profligate, he often pays large sums of hush money as a regular item of his expense, part of the wages of persistent sin. Were professional confidences not sacred I could tell stories of millionaires who have not only been blackmailed repeatedly as individuals, but stories of professional criminals who have extorted money from different members of the same family in a rotation that amounted almost to a routine system.

You, Mr. Reader, though your life is clean, if you possess wealth enough to make you attractive to criminals in this branch of wrongdoing, may not inconceivably become a victim. One little indiscretion, a single step out of the straight and narrow path, may land you in such a predicament as those I am going to describe.

You would probably call your little lapse an "indiscretion." The detective and blackmailer, however, call it a "weakness," and such weaknesses will continue to be found in human nature

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

of a decidedly high standard until the human race is greatly improved.

A banker came to me in great anxiety and told his story of extortion. Well-to-do, with a wife and fine children, a country home, most of his life a clean-living man, he had time on his hands after the exchange closed every day, strolled about in uptown New York, sought adventure, and found it in the guise of an "injured husband," who threatened to make public certain assertions of a most damning character. He has already paid the "injured husband" fifty-five thousand dollars, and as always happens in blackmail cases, when money is paid, was re-blackmailed. Further demand was now made for twenty-five thousand dollars, and the "injured husband" threatened that if the money was not forthcoming he and his wife would go to the banker's home and tell the whole story to his wife and daughters.

"What shall I do?" he concluded, despondently.

"Make a date to have this fellow and the woman go up to your home and tell your wife everything," I said.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

“Good heavens—”

“But before the day comes around, of course, you must send your wife and daughters away,” I added, reassuringly. “Wouldn’t they enjoy a quiet trip to Europe, or around the West Indies, or somewhere that will keep them away for some time? You must dismiss every servant, or send them on vacations, ostensibly closing your home. When the day arrives, this fellow and his woman will be received by your wife, will meet your daughters, will see the butler, parlor-maid—everything will be natural, but every person in the house that day will be a detective.”

Well, the great day arrived, and the black-mailer and his female accomplice with it. They were met at the door by the butler, who made considerable fuss about ascertaining their business, which they insisted was strictly personal. Finally they were admitted, reluctantly, and after Mrs. Banker had sent two beautiful girls away, the “injured husband,” in tones that were almost pathetic, told how his home had been broken up. Mrs. Banker listened attentively until he had finished, and then said:

“Is that all? Why, you don’t seem to know



## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

one-tenth as much about my husband as I do! I am a woman of experience, and know that men are not angels. Even if what you said were true, which I don't believe, I would forgive my husband freely."

Ringling for the butler she added:

"Hopkins, open the front door. Open it wide, and see that these persons leave the house, and leave the grounds."

It was a well-managed "plant." Everything went through without a hitch. The visitors never discovered that they had talked with detectives instead of the real wife.

It was a lovely "plant"—only, it didn't work!

Having failed to make an impression upon the banker's wife, the blackmailer still had the resource of publicity. He threatened to divulge his information to the newspapers. Arrangements were made for a conference between the blackmailer and his victim at an uptown hotel, where we wired several rooms with the dictagraph and had witnesses concealed. After considerable dickering, some marked money was paid, and I secured evidence with which to confront the blackmailer, giving him the alternative

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

of going downtown to the district attorney's office, or repaying the fifty-five thousand dollars that he had already extorted. He protested that the money had been invested in a "Western business," and that he was unable to pay.

Here is where the experienced investigator has the advantage of the inexperienced victim of blackmail:

We went into this fellow's record exhaustively, through the branches of the Pinkerton organization, and discovered that he had not only been engaged in blackmailing for some time, but that he came of an excellent Middle Western family, one of his brothers being in charge of business in a whole state for a large corporation. This made it possible to blackmail the blackmailer, threatening that if the banker's money were not returned, all the evidence in the case would be laid before his family.

The money was returned.

When Uncle Sam enacted the Mann law, he had in mind the commendable purpose of breaking up interstate and international "white slave" traffic. Actually, as it has worked out, he gave blackmailing the greatest impetus and aid it has

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

ever had anywhere. By far the biggest field for the blackmailer nowadays is in Mann act violations and fabrications. Some of our great resort towns, where millions of people go yearly for relaxation, are fairly honeycombed with blackmailing organizations.

It was another Wall Street man who came to me, saying, "I am being persistently called on the telephone, in my office and at my home, by a woman who says she is in possession of information to the effect that an agent of the Department of Justice secured evidence against me as a Mann act violater during a recent trip I made to Atlantic City. This agent is willing to destroy the affidavits, already drawn, for a payment of seven thousand dollars, and the woman demands three thousand dollars for her work as an intermediary. She wants me to meet her, bringing the money. What shall I do?"

"You are going to do it," I told him. "That is, you are going to make an appointment with this woman, and meet her—but I am going to be you."

When the blackmailer called him up again, ar-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

rangements were made for her to be at a certain street corner and get into the broker's limousine when it drove up. She did not know the broker by sight, and she did not know me when I drove up, impersonating the broker, though there were certain reasons why she might have recognized an old friend. The broker and a woman, whose rôle in the case will be made clear presently, were riding in a taxicab behind, following up the limousine wherever it went.

The blackmailer was a study. A Broadway queen. Dressed for the first act in a Winter Garden show. "Little Bo-Peep" they used to call her in the cabarets in the old days. Miss Dissipation now. A "coke fiend," with a made-over face and drab blond hair.

"Step right in, young lady," I said, when the car stopped and the blackmailer came forward. After the door was shut I assured her that nobody could overhear anything she had to say, as the car was closed and the chauffeur could not hear. We became quite chummy and drove to a quiet place in the park, talking. Suddenly I signaled the chauffeur to stop, and began laughing heartily.



## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

“What’s the big idea of the laughter?” she asked, suspiciously.

“I’m laughing at you, knocking on the door of the Tombs, trying to get in. You don’t seem to know me, but I know you very well, and for a woman engaging in the dangerous business of blackmail you are about the biggest boob I ever encountered!”

When I called her by her “monicker,” and reviewed that part of her criminal career of which I had knowledge, she became so excited that the dummy affidavits drawn for extortion—there was no real Department of Justice charge against my client—slipped out of her muff and fell to the floor. Picking them up, I told her there were two things she could do—“open up” about her accomplices, or go down to police headquarters. She decided to “open up.”

This case had a dramatic finale.

We drove to the woman’s apartment, the taxicab following, and I went upstairs with her, where two accomplices were waiting. One of them was a criminal who had served time, and with him his wife. He was the brother of the woman in the taxicab, who was the fiancée of the



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

broker who was being blackmailed. Thus, the brother was virtually blackmailing his own sister.

To leave the apartment meant that I would not be likely to get in again. So, authoritatively, I ordered one of the women to telephone downstairs to the switchboard operator and ask the woman sitting in the taxi to step up. There was a dramatic meeting between brother and sister, and with much crying the real story came out. The brother, released from prison a few months ago, was desperately hard up, and had framed this extortion against his sister's intended husband, using the woman who telephoned as an agent. On my advice, the broker relieved the brother's poverty with several hundred dollars.

The blackmailer is a human vampire or blood sucker. Everybody who knows what his graft is hates him. In prison he is an outcast, if his fellow inmates know what he is doing his bit for. He actually hates himself. Blackmailing is a carefully studied criminal profession. The idea is to get something on somebody who is worth while, and then shake him down. They are all students of the weak, themselves parasites and degenerates, without legitimate occupation—

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

genteel, sleek, oily knaves without conscience. Cold-blooded thieves without a soul, ready to destroy any human being, male or female, for gain, no matter how far-reaching and scandalous their accusations and information. Sometimes they get into this nefarious game by finding a chance. They are just like the germ in the human system, always dangerous, and often fatal in their work. Dante would punish them by ripping out their tongues and boiling them in oil forever.

Blackmailers are divided into two classes, the amateur and the professional. The amateur is usually a small-fry operator who learns something detrimental to his employer, such as familiarity between the boss and a good-looking stenographer, or an intercepted affectionate telephone message between the boss and some outside attraction. Ladies' maids, butlers, chauffeurs and valets are in the amateur class, prying into the affairs of their employers and threatening to divulge what they know. They practice especially upon certain types of indiscreet society women.

The professionals, men and women, follow

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

blackmail as a cold business proposition, systematizing everything. It is the one class of crime that does not require capital to embark in.

People who get a great deal of money very quickly make excellent victims. The war "profiteer" brought a great stimulus to blackmailing. For people suddenly grown rich, who have never enjoyed the luxuries, attentions and pleasures of wealth, are much more likely to become involved in escapades than people to whom wealth is natural. But the blackmailer is always on the lookout for the tempting combination of money and a family skeleton in the closet.

There is a separate field for blackmail outside of family secrets and escapades. The income tax has made its opportunities for blackmailers, because the man with an income large enough to pay heavy surtaxes cannot, naturally, keep it hidden from everybody. There are always partners or employees who must know the facts, and their knowledge is used for extortion. Prohibition has opened up the new possibility of blackmailing the bootlegger, in whose business the law of the jungle prevails, for when a set of crooks try to gouge money out of him to keep

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

quiet, he usually sets his own bunch of crooks at them. Blackmail is also common in shady lines of business, such as the bucketshop, where employees gain incriminating knowledge. But these crooks are generally successful in protecting themselves.

There are many ways for the blackmailer to break into the game. Sometimes they begin as ordinary cabaret waiters, eventually become the best man for female frequenters, determine whom the girls are vamping, and sooner or later suggest a touch by catching the victim in a compromising position, even photographing him and selling the negative to him as a valuable painting for a fabulous sum. The blackmailer knows how strong the victim is financially. The stronger he is, the bigger the touch. With them, it is just like a good many so-called legitimate business houses. How much will the bank roll stand? Shrink it accordingly.

I knew a man and two prepossessing girls—innocent looking kiddies still in their teens—who traveled all over Europe for their American victims, got the goods on them, and deferred the trimming process until they all landed back in



## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

America. Their work was all done through attorneys. Real papers were drawn for alienation, breach of promise, etc., and served on the victim. The publicity of these damnable accusations would ruin him, his children, and his children's children. He would order his lawyer to stop it at any cost. These blackmailers, the man passing as the husband of one of the girls and brother-in-law guardian of the other, collected millions from a number of victims in America, and most of the groundwork was laid in Europe, or on the steamers going or coming.

The ocean greyhound is a great camping ground for these vultures. Somehow, sea travelers, especially now that America is nearly dry, loosen up outside the twelve-mile limit and look for all the pleasure they can find. People are more indiscreet on an ocean liner than any other place in the world. It is a sort of freedom of the sea—but they pay.

Two girls—not girls either, in their thirties—traveled the ocean liners alone without any male companions to aid them, and trapped hundreds into compromising positions. One of the young ladies, beautiful and fascinating, worked as the



## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

lure and magnet, while the other, who looked like a candidate for the sisterhood, accidentally entered the stateroom at the psychological moment, shocked beyond belief.

"My poor, innocent sister, dear unprotected child," would be the horrified wail, amid sobs and tears, "but you'll pay for this," addressing the man. They actually shadowed their victims to steamers, engaged passage, and laid for them—to make them settle and settle good—into the thousands.

The work of a clever blackmailer, dastardly as it is, appeals to the criminal vanity of any one engaged in it.

While traveling in Europe recently I ran across a very light-colored negro who was one time an exercise boy on American race tracks. He was very well dressed in evening clothes, when I saw him in a high-class Paris restaurant and cabaret. I could not believe my own eyes when I first saw him, because he was in the company of some apparently well-to-do white ladies. He was paying much attention to a middle-aged, good-looking white matron.

After studying him for awhile, I recalled that

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

he had been arraigned before me in police headquarters in New York for blackmailing. He has a great game, and gets away with it all over the world by posing as a rich South American or Cuban planter. Works his way into good society, proposes marriage to white women, and suddenly his white sweetheart appears on the scene, exposes him as a negro. He immediately tells the victim what a dangerous woman his white associate is, that she is so much in love with him she would not stop at anything. Meanwhile the Cuban planter confesses that he is a negro, and recommends to his attractive companion that it is better to pay his white friend than to be exposed. This darky is an artist at his work—uses brilliantine, has had the kinks all taken out of his hair, and with face lotions and cosmetics has made himself several degrees lighter in color than he used to be.

There is a certain pride in doing a big job, because the blackmailer knows he is committing a criminal act upon an individual who has also violated the law. It is not that the law-breaking amounts to so much, but the exposure is what is deadly. Anything nowadays to avoid notoriety.

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

No one is spared. There are many ways the criminally inclined get into this work. They figure that there is seldom if ever an arrest, little chance of assault by the victim, a big money game with little risk, requiring a certain amount of nerve, but not much when "the goods" is strong on the victim. Strangely enough, there is a very small percentage of victims who ever report their crimes to the authorities. The blackmailer knows this. The police and district attorney cannot grant absolute secrecy. The whole story is bound to become public after arrest and prosecution. Naturally, if the victim is guilty as charged by the blackmailer, he would rather pay than be exposed. It is the blackmailer's business not to let anybody, especially in criminal circles, know what his graft is, lest he also be shook down. It is a business of dog-eat-dog. Sometimes thieves blackmail each other. Lawyers blackmail their blackmailing clients. How much money would you guess is paid yearly by bootleggers as hush money to some one who knows all the details of their peculiar business? It runs into hundreds of thousands.

Individuals and business concerns are made to

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

pay by persons who know they have doctored their income tax report. Any questionable, illegal transaction, whether by the banker or the bootlegger, is open to the shake-down by people who know it, and want to engage in work of that kind. It is a case of the crook shaking down the crook, as the former sees it.

While stopping in a prominent California hotel last winter, the names of two callers were announced to my room over the telephone—a male and female—names I did not know. When I subsequently met them in the hotel corridor, I knew them as two former extraordinary, professional, international thieves. They looked prosperous but not contented. The woman did the talking, “Commissioner,” she said, “you know all about my husband and myself, we’ve been out picking pockets, doing heel work and pennyweighting for many a day. About a year ago we decided to settle down and bought an apartment house. It is filled with tenants who pay their rents regular, but just as we were getting along fine, happy and contented, along came some Eastern thieves that we used to work with who threaten to expose our past to our tenants and the



## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

police, if we don't come across with a part of the rent. We read in the paper that you were out here and knew that we could tell you about our predicament. You also know whether our story is on the level or not, whether we really have reformed, and we want some advice from you. You know we have some kids growing up now, and we don't want them to know about our past."

I was convinced of their sincerity because if they had not reformed they would keep as far away from me as possible. I put them in a taxicab. We were driven to Police Headquarters where I introduced them to the Chief and told him their story as they related it to me. He had more faith in humanity than the average Chief of Police and realized the situation at a glance. From his pocket he drew an official card, on the back of which he wrote his residence telephone number. "If any member of this department arrests you, night or day," he said, "just show them this card and have them call me up, or if any thieves attempt to blackmail you, let me know, and we will attend to them post-haste."

I do not recall ever having seen a more con-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

tented expression than was on the faces of these two human beings as we were leaving Police Headquarters. "Let them try anything now," their countenances showed. I thought it was fine of the Chief to do this—big, broad and human; but this sort of thing often occurs among professional thieves. They find out each other's secrets and blackmail until the well runs dry.

Somehow, in many of the most notorious blackmailing cases, women have figured. They are reckoned on as good tools for men in the work.

There are some peculiar angles to these cases:

A celebrated inventor in New Jersey received an anonymous letter, threatening him and his family harm unless he deposited one thousand dollars in the corner of a local cemetery "at midnight under a rock. If you tell the police, you'll be found dead."

I spent a long time with the genius, protecting him and investigating. I reasoned the letter was of Italian origin. Sure enough, an Italian, as soon as he found I was on the ground investigating, showed me a letter exactly like the one the wizard had received. Identical, postmarked

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

the same, printed with the same rubber alphabets, etc., and if he did not put the money in the corner of a local cemetery "under a rock at midnight, or if you tell the police, you'll wake up dead some fine morning." I looked for a motive, and soon found one. The Italian had sent himself one of the letters. While his wife was in Europe he became a gay young Lothario and paid court to a dusky daughter of sunny Italy. So much so, that he had to draw five hundred dollars out of the bank. What would be more plausible than to tell his home-coming wife that he was blackmailed out of the five hundred dollars? "Put it under the rock in the cemetery to save Rocco from being stolen—the kidnapers are busy." Everybody of importance in town got some kind of letter. Even Mr. Electricity. Cunning, but discovered.

The Italians are blackmailed here in America more than any other nationality, always by their own countrymen, and usually by former neighbors in Italy. All these crimes are of Italian origin, in many instances committed by Sicilians and Calabrians. The Italian is superstitious, and always filled with fear when threatened

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

anonymously. He seldom confides his troubles to the police, especially kidnaping, which is a common occurrence. In many instances they pay. The murder of a kidnaped boy in New York is fresh in our minds. The parents reported the kidnaping to the police. The boy was killed. By very excellent work on the part of the police, the murderers were apprehended and convicted. It has always been difficult to get details from parents who receive these threatening kidnaping letters. These Italians are skillful at making the "death sign," a silent gesture threatening murder, in and out of court. They can scare the very life out of Italian witnesses, and sometimes prevent them from testifying, by the "death sign."

A favorite method of blackmail collecting by the Italian is bomb throwing. If the money demanded is not paid, a bomb is thrown at the residence or business place of the victim, sometimes inflicting injuries and demolishing property. Like the kidnaping letters, receivers of these bomb letters are sometimes afraid to report the receipt of them to the police. Italian bomb blackmailers in New York City have been



## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

met with measures peculiarly suited to that form of crime. A special bomb squad of Italian detectives handles such cases. Owing to difficulties of language and Latin temperament, it is well nigh impossible for officers of any other nationality to get to the bottom of these bomb plots, and even an Italian detective sent to Italy some years ago from the New York Police Department, to make arrangements for the exchange of information with the Italian police officials, was murdered on the other side. In some of the remote parts of Italy, from which most of the bombers come, I am told, there is a sub-government of bribery and violence that the people have learned through generations to accept as a matter of course, and the first generation of Italian immigrants have brought this secret government with them. But the Italian detective knows his own people, and can get into the current of these plots and extortions, running down the bands that make a business of it. In one round-up, while I was in the New York City Police Department in charge of detectives, nineteen bomb men were arrested for one hundred seventy-eight bomb explosions. They consisted

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

of blackmailers, lookouts and bomb men. Part of their work was to destroy business competition with bombs—blow up, for a “client,” his competitor’s store or business place.

Another interesting kind of crime in our large cities, among people of foreign birth, is the extortion of money from business competitors. At one time in New York City, money was extorted from business men by the cruel method of poisoning their horses if they did not pay. While the driver of a delivery wagon was off his vehicle for a few moments, a poisoned apple would be given his horse, and he came back to find the animal in death throes. Bomb criminals have also, at times, found a demand for their professional services in labor disputes, setting off bombs where strike-breakers or non-union workers were employed. Explosives would be placed in the hallway of a sweat shop, and fired by a long fuse about the time newly engaged employees began work. The detonation would be so terrific that employees deserted that concern. There was a regular market price for such fireworks, one explosion costing from fifty to three hundred dollars, according to the size of the

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

bank roll possessed by the individual or organization that wanted such an effect produced.

It is possible that I have handled more blackmailers than any other American detective, because of my peculiar knowledge of the underworld, the theatrical world and the so-called "sporting element" who engage in this work. In ninety cases out of one hundred, if the blackmailer is paid, he comes again for more. It is always up to the victim what action he desires to take. Prosecute or pay. It is a fearless and brave man, though, who will prosecute. Most men or women in these situations cannot afford to prosecute. People must be sure in these matters. They must be careful to whom they tell their troubles. It must be some one of absolute integrity, who also knows what to do.

Much of my work is in quieting the emotions of the victim. Working upon his victim with fear, the blackmailer produces effects that require a lot of missionary treatment, real mental healing and character rehabilitation. Very often the victim of blackmail has carried his or her trouble around secretly for months, trying to get rid of it by the payment of money, only to find

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

that it sticks all the closer, and it is not uncommon for the detective to find, when they first confide in him, that they have resolved upon suicide as the only solution of their troubles, the last desperate resort. But where there is a will, there is a way. Everybody from a baby up to a bank president needs a manager these days. The victim of blackmailers needs a trained staff of them.

Generally speaking, protection against blackmail calls for a counter-offensive, and it is not possible to do much without knowledge of the parties attempting extortion, and evidence showing that they are criminals. Because many rich victims lead such dissolute lives as to be virtually criminals themselves, millions of dollars of blackmail have been paid quietly, and are being paid, and will continue to be paid as long as victims have incriminating circumstances to be hushed up. What an experienced detective could tell about the lives of many persons who stand high in the community would be highly sensational—but like the priest and journalist, an honorable detective keeps faith and confidence.

A few years ago, the son of a well-to-do Amer-



## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

ican was sent abroad to study. He was twenty-two years of age and good looking. Before the ship on which he sailed was out of sight of land, he was in the meshes of one of the world's most notorious vampires. Rudyard Kipling must have met her before he wrote his famous poem, because the same methods were followed.

Incidentally, I may say that Europe is many generations older than America in the seductive art, with its trained courtesans coming down from days when their position was practically recognized at the monarch's court and the nobleman's castle. No American parent, nor any American business concern either, should send young men abroad without some sort of safeguard, for the cleanest young American, thrown into this dazzling new life of continental dissipation, often goes utterly to the bad in a few weeks through lack of experience.

However, this was one of our own native American vamps, with European experience. Arriving in Europe, instead of arranging for his studies, the young man was lured away to milady's castle. She was forty, but a wonder-worker. She sold him her motor car for seven

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

thousand dollars, brought him back to America and, while he was under the influence of liquor, induced him to sign an agreement to marry her. He belonged to one of America's richest and haughtiest families. When he came to his senses—his father did not know he had returned—he consulted friends who brought him to me. After I listened attentively to his story, I exhibited to him the rogues' gallery photographs of a number of female blackmailers.

"If you select your charmer from among this bunch," I said, "I can help you."

At first he hesitated. She must have hypnotized the lad. Finally he pointed to a picture and apologetically said:

"That's her."

She was known to me as "the Baroness," and had been arrested for robbery in San Francisco—stealing from the person of a male associate while under the influence of liquor. Her record extended across the American continent to China and Japan. Her escapades in Europe would have filled volumes. She had engaged a lawyer to force the young man to make good his written promise to marry her.

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

"Agree to marry her," I instructed, "but before doing so bring her and her attorney to your lawyer's office. I'll be there. Ask me, just before anything is agreed to, if I know the lady. Make it dramatic. I'll do the rest."

While the preparations were being made to stage this scene in the performance, I learned that the lady's chauffeur, who also came to America with them, was her lover and sweetheart of several years' standing, an important actor in the performance. He heard much of what her victim talked about; knew where he went and what he did; almost knew what he was thinking about.

Everything went beautifully at the attorney's office. Each step in the negotiations seemed to bring the young man and his millions closer to her ladyship's grasp. But at the psychological moment I was called in and asked:

"Chief, do you know this lady?"

"Certainly—that's 'Baroness du Barry,' alias so-and-so and so-and-so," I replied. "She was involved in the A case in San Francisco, the B case in Monte Carlo, the C case in Hong-kong—"

Her personal history and criminal record were

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

backed up by an exquisite police department Bertillon photograph *de luxe*. That brought the drama to a climax and a happy ending for the young man. She not only said nothing more of marriage or millions, but returned much of the money that had been extorted from the young man, to escape prosecution.

Some months later, at the Grand Cañon, I met the young man and the friend who brought him to me.

"That was a lucky break you got," I said, half patting myself on the back for picking out the treacherous dame.

"Yes, it was," he said. "I always appreciated your end of it. But my lawyer, with all this confidential information in his possession, trimmed me out of nearly as much as she tried to. Which is the worst?"

I refused to answer.

There is one other way against the black-mailer—that of out-witting and out-talking him.

The doctor of a large factory once told me that if people whose clothing was accidentally caught in machinery could keep their heads,



## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

there was nearly always time to stop the machinery before they were actually hurt. If they lost their heads, however, they might be drawn in. One day a big Pole was brought to his office for examination, after being caught in a machine. It had caught his coat and pulled, but instead of being frightened, he had pulled against the machine. He wasn't stronger than the machine, but he was stronger than his coat, which gave way and let him escape uninjured. The doctor noticed a great scar on his chest, and the Pole told him that it had been made in fighting a wolf when he was a boy.

Here is the story of a victim who, when the blackmailer pulled, was stronger than his coat.

Picture to yourself a great New York mansion, some years ago, when millionaires could still afford to live in big houses. A warm night in midsummer—the family all away in the country, except father, who is living there all alone, with three or four servants.

Father is a mighty fine human being. The president of a great corporation, a churchman, a bank trustee, and an administrator of friends' estates. A man with a good human and spirit-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

ual vibration, respected and trusted, who never did a shady thing in his life.

Once in a while—maybe once a week—father enjoys a cocktail. He mixes himself one to-night. It imparts a pleasant feeling of relaxation and buoyancy after a busy day, and makes the warm weather and the big lonely house more tolerable. He mixes himself another, and sips it, but that is the limit.

Suddenly the telephone rings, and answering, he hears the voice of a neighbor, inviting him to take a stroll. Like himself, the neighbor is a rich man, and a fairly clean one, but to-night he is going to call on a charming woman he has met recently, and invites father to go along. Father's second cocktail is jingling pleasantly. He feels adventurous. He goes.

The charming woman lives in an apartment a short taxicab ride uptown. She is vivacious, witty, a good sport, a connoisseur in off-color stories, quick on the trigger with suggestive repartee. She mixes cocktails, and father drinks another, and lets himself drift along on the growing tide of a very pleasant and unusual evening for him. He drifts until, while nothing

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

wrong has happened, there is what might appear a compromising situation to an outsider, abruptly bursting into the room. Such an outsider does burst in, or lets himself in with a pass key. He is the "injured husband." He begins threatening both visitors abusively.

"You're a nice pair of old birds, damn you! Breaking up a man's home! Captains of industry! Pillars of the church! Prominent citizens! Hell, I'll show you up all right, both of you—"

And so forth, and so forth.

Now, father isn't the sort of man easily cowed. All his business life he has been accustomed to expecting the unexpected, and dealing vigorously with it the moment it materializes. He knows people, and is a shrewd talker and horse-trader in obtaining his ends. After the first surprise he becomes clear-headed and alert. He begins to talk.

"There has been no wrong-doing," he says. "Even if there had been, what evidence have you got?"

The more threatening and abusive the injured husband, the calmer and surer father grows.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

"You haven't a bit of evidence—not a scrap!" he insists, and by sheer presence of mind and talking ability, makes the blackmailer waiver, doubting his own game.

But the next day, reassured by accomplices, the blackmailer came back on the job, confident that he did have evidence, and that clever talk would not break it down, and let father escape payment. He appeared at the latter's office, demanding money, and threatening to make his alleged evidence public.

Now, the moment a blackmailer exposes his evidence, it is worthless, of course, for blackmailing purposes. He may damage his victim grievously, and many a blackmailer is so disappointed when he does not succeed in getting money that he will do it for sheer revenge and satisfaction. But when his game has been made public, he's through—that is a very important point in fighting blackmail.

And a public-spirited citizen who will stand the brunt of exposure, and prosecute the criminal, not only renders a great service to the community, but makes the blackmailer stop, look and listen.



## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

Again father pulled stoutly, refusing to pay a cent, saying that he could stand exposure if the other fellow could, and again he was stronger than his coat. The crooks had more than one reason for avoiding exposure themselves, and dropped this victim.

In this connection, I want to say that great credit is due to a citizen who will take such a stand, undergoing exposure as a means of bringing blackmailers to justice. He deserves the sympathy of his fellow citizens, not their condemnation, and after the first calumny of exposure, and condemnatory newspaper publicity, if prosecution of blackmailers follows, public opinion and sympathy should swing around to the victim.

One of the newest forms of blackmail in New York City is that in which the victim, often a visitor from out of town, is picked up by a party of fellow diners in some high-class restaurant, apparently decent people, out like himself for a good time. He is inveigled to a motion-picture house, sitting beside one of the women in the party he got acquainted with at dinner. Suddenly there is a suppressed cry in the darkness,

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

and one of the women accuses him of an indecent act.

"You don't need to tell me what he did," says her indignant male escort. "I saw it all myself, and was just going to punch him!" Other members of the party assist in terrifying the victim, who hasn't a single witness on his side, and they act as corroborators if suit is brought—for in these cases a summons and complaint is served upon the dupe, with all the details related. Many a well-to-do young American has had to come across for large sums as a result of one visit to a moving-picture theater with such a party.

There is almost no crime, real or alleged, unless it is a very degrading one, that any one should hesitate to reveal to the authorities, if he becomes involved in blackmail. To deal with the blackmailer himself, or his representatives, is simply encouraging their operations, and becoming more deeply involved, and by reason of fear and secrecy, less able to extricate one's self. It is always best to refuse to listen to any attempts at blackmail. The old stock in trade of such criminals is the secret information for which

## BLACKMAIL—DIFFICULT SUBJECT

they demand hush money. If they expose it, their stock in trade is gone, while if they use it to shake down the victim, they know they are violating the law.

There are two easy ways to frustrate the blackmailer:

One is to fight him with the assistance of experienced officials.

And the other is, don't give him the chance—be good, even though you are sometimes lonesome!

## CHAPTER VI

### JUNGLE FOLK—THE DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

**T**HE skill, cunning and low visibility of the “dinner thief” is comparable with the invisibility of wild animals in their native haunts. Also called the “porch climber” and “second story worker,” he is seldom seen, hardly ever identified, and almost never convicted.

Some years ago a Wall Street man came to me with the story of a robbery in his home.

“I make a good deal of money,” he said, “and not long ago stopped in at Tiffany’s and bought my wife a fifteen-thousand-dollar pearl necklace. She locked it in a trunk in its box. Night before last we had a party of friends to dinner. My wife took the necklace out of the trunk, clasped it around her neck, put the box in the top drawer of her chiffonier, and locked the drawer. Instead of placing the box back in the trunk after



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

our friends had gone, she put it in the box in the top drawer.

“Last night, as we were about to retire, I asked her to lock the necklace in the trunk again, remarking that fifteen thousand dollars was quite a bit of money to let lie around carelessly. She agreed with me, and opened the chiffonier drawer. The box was there, just as she had placed it, but the necklace was gone.”

One of my assistants went to this gentleman's house in the country, and made an investigation that convinced him an “inside job” had been committed by the servants, of whom there were six or seven. His deduction was, that the person who stole the pearls knew they were taken from the locked trunk and worn the evening of the party. According to his idea, this must have been some one in the house. He got no evidence, after skillful cross examination, however, and the Wall Street man protested that his servants would not do such a thing.

“Why, I take them all down to Coney Island in my car several times during the summer. We visit Luna Park, and I take them all to the big shows, like the Hippodrome and Follies. Your

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

man is clever, but I think he has the wrong idea in this case. Won't you look into it yourself?"

Going to the house, I made a very careful examination, leading to the conclusion that it was a "climber" job. On the porch beneath the window in which the robbery had occurred there was a significant mark on a pillar indicating where the "climbing" was done, and inspection of the room with a tallow candle revealed fingerprints on a mantel near the window, which the thief had made going through the window. A tallow candle reveals fingerprints much more clearly than electric light.

Photographing these fingerprints for identification, I found they were those of an extraordinary dinner thief, well-known to detectives for his clever work. Incidentally, I may explain that this field of crime calls for such skill and resourcefulness that the really good porch climbers in this country can be counted on your fingers. I can name practically all of them. This chap was one of the best, a fellow who could go the average detective one better in cunning and skill, and especially clean in his work and getaway—very clean.

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

When I explained these facts to the Wall Street man, he was greatly interested in the thief.

"I can get this fellow very soon," I said, "and the fingerprints, with his record, will convict him."

"I shouldn't want to go into court and prosecute such a man," he said. "He might become very annoying after he got out of prison, or would have friends who would make reprisals. All I want is to recover my wife's pearls. See if you can get them back. I am mighty glad our servants are exonerated. To tell you the truth, I was a little suspicious of them, under the circumstances."

Through certain channels, I got hold of a man able to put me in touch with this criminal. The pearls were still intact. To have acted as go-between myself would have been to compound a felony.

"I will give one thousand dollars for the pearls," said the owner, "provided the man who took them brings them himself. And I will give another thousand for the privilege of talking with him."

They finally met in the lobby of the Vanderbilt

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Hotel. The pearls were restored, the two thousand paid, and the broker and criminal became warm friends.

"If I can ever do anything for you," said the Wall Street man, "let me know."

A year or two later I "had" this criminal for a safe-blowing job, something in which, being less expert, he had got caught with the goods.

"How about your Wall Street friend?" I asked.

"That was a wonderful man!" he replied. "I never expected to meet such a man—didn't believe there were gentlemen like that in the world. You know, it wasn't his house at all that I went out to rob that night. I had another job all doped out, and it would have been a better haul. But while the family was at dinner downstairs, there were servants upstairs, and I couldn't work. Not wanting to go back empty-handed, I noticed this house, studied it, and got in the bedroom window. First I locked the door, to be sure that I could put a good distance between myself and that house if interrupted. Then I looked for valuables. You know how it is—there are only a few places to look, like bureau



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

drawers, behind pictures, in laundry bags, and so forth. With my screws (skeleton keys) I opened the chiffonier drawer, took the pearls, put the box back exactly, and locked the drawer again. Sometimes these swells never look in jewel boxes, and it's weeks before the loss is discovered. That's the reason I always leave the container behind. I'm glad his wife got them back. Say do you know what? Some day I hope to make a haul big enough to pay that gentleman's money back!"

The dinner thief is almost always small of stature, and in personality the kind of person at whom you would never look twice. Certain wild animals have only to stand still when in danger of detection, and immediately blend into the landscape, or resemble stones or stumps. The dinner thief disappears in that way, if you do see him—stands still and becomes a human stone or stump. When approaching or entering premises he uses every art of concealment.

"Why, I only half saw him," witnesses say, when examined after these robberies, to secure identification. "I could hardly be certain that I saw a man at all, and I don't see anybody in this

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

group of people that looks anything like him."

Johnny Kadra, a Syrian lad of eighteen, who single-handed robbed more private residences from Maine to California than any other professional thief, could enter and conceal himself in residences for hours and evade detection. I "had" him for a big jewel robbery in New York City—and had him so fast and tight that he became confidential with me about his work. Originally, he was a peddler of laces, embroidery and so forth. You know how pious and saintly these Syrian peddlers can look—they remind one of some sacred painting. Often he visited vast estates, entered the houses and roamed about the rooms without interference. If discovered, he professed ignorance, lack of knowledge of English. No one ever suspected that he would steal. When he found the opportunities so great, he adopted stealing as a profession, covering his work by posing as a saintly peddler. He stole eight years before he was caught, convicted and sent to prison. He told me he often remained for hours in Milady's closet, concealed behind garments hanging on hooks, overheard conversations, and eventually stole every bit of

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

jewelry to be found. He was caught only once—then by a pastor, one of those goodhearted clergymen who forgave him, let him go, and told him to sin no more. I got him through the confession of a confederate. He was a wonderful thief, but wound up with ten years in Sing Sing prison. He worked in robes, and discarded them for street clothes when not on jobs. Anyone can figure how difficult an identification of him would be under these circumstances.

The dinner thief seldom works with other criminals. He finds his prospective jobs, makes his own observations to get the knowledge of people necessary, plans the crime, and carries it out alone. A more daring type of thief working along the same general lines is the rope-ladder climber, who fastens a rope ladder to a chimney, descends to a window, enters an apartment, locks the door, secures valuables and escapes over roofs.

These criminals thrive not only through their physical adroitness and elusiveness, but their close observation and knowledge of human nature. The best protection against them, if you have valuables, is to study your own habits and

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

stop the carelessness and criminal negligence that make their work successful.

The victim always wonders how the thief finds his loot. It's very simple. The hiding places of most people are alike. Practically every woman puts jewelry in the top drawers of bureaus, usually right-hand side. Or they conceal it in linen or lingerie in other drawers, hide it under paper in bottoms of drawers, put it behind pictures, under rugs, in sofa pillows, laundry bags, clothes baskets and other similar hiding places. The thief knows this, and is an adroit finder. "Job pickers" are numerous nowadays. They frequent the theaters, restaurants, cabarets; spot people who are wearing costly jewelry; follow and determine where they live, and what the chances of robbing them are. The job-picker spends freely to get his information, using his own car to trail victims, and for the getaway after the trick has been turned. It is not unusual for the thief to appropriate ladies' hose, gloves and other feminine belongings to create the impression that the job was done by female servants or "insiders."

The wearing of jewelry has not only grown to



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

a startling extent the past ten or fifteen years in the value of the gems, but the regularity with which the jewels are worn and the number of places. A generation ago, the average woman had perhaps a few hundred dollars' worth of rings, a bracelet or two, and a gold-bead necklace. A thousand dollars' worth of jewelry was a pretty high average, and ten thousand dollars' worth created notoriety. Women wore their jewels only on grand occasions—at the opera, the charity ball, a formal dance at home. Men wore little jewelry—a heavy gold watch and chain, a ring that had some sentimental value, a stickpin with a modest diamond—that was all.

To-day, women go about our big cities wearing tens of thousands of dollars' worth of jewelry in the hotel, the cabaret, the theater and movie show. They wear valuable gems while going about to questionable places, and late at night. Where the rich man's wife of other days alone could afford gems, now they are in the possession of the profiteer's wife and the bootlegger's lady. Then, thousands of immigrants from other countries invest their savings in diamonds and put them on their women. Altogether,

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

there is so much jewelry around our big cities that it offers great attraction to the professional thief, and lamentable temptation to the amateur. The professional can literally pick booty off people, as was shown some months ago when a thief reached through the window of a New York elevated train, as it was pulling out of a station, and deftly removed several thousand dollars' worth of diamonds from the person of a Jewish matron.

Give your wife a valuable jewel, and for a time she will realize its value. But familiarity breeds contempt. The sense of value fades as time goes on, and the jewel is always found where the owner hid it when she wants it. She forgets that it is so much money, although she would take extra pains to safeguard the equivalent in bank notes. Generally, too, valuable jewelry is insured, which also tends to make owners careless, though the belief that they cannot lose, even if insured jewelry is stolen or lost, is making the insurance companies extremely cautious about writing policies. Women have an innate belief that no thief could ever rob them. Valuable jewelry that the owner has had

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

several years will often be less carefully watched than new gowns or hats worth less than a single gem. The jewels are an old story, while the new gown or hat still impresses its value upon the possessor.

Many valuable jewels are lost in the wash-rooms of hotels and restaurants. Women come into town wearing their rings, take them off to wash their hands, and actually forget to put them on again. When the loss is realized, it is usually too late—the gems have disappeared. They are very seldom recovered, but it is not the professional thief who takes them, once in fifty times. They are found by the next person, who is tempted, and becomes an amateur thief. The first impulse is to be honest—not to steal. But jewels exert a fascination upon many women—and the next person is a woman. "If I don't take them, somebody else will," the finder argues with her conscience, and the jewels are quietly spirited away.

Many theatrical women wear costly jewels, partly for stage display, and partly through vanity. Jewels are also the stage woman's form of saving. In the bustle of her life at hotels and on

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

trains, she either becomes careless, or keeps her valuables in exactly the places a thief would first look for them, knowing her habits.

The jewel thief will spend weeks studying the premises where there is the possibility of a big job, and observing the daily habits of the people who live there. And he will spend weeks shadowing a woman who carries valuable gems, or a salesman with valuable samples, waiting for the opportunity to steal and make a safe getaway.

By far the greater number of jewel robberies are committed in country houses, and villas at the most fashionable summer and winter resorts. These places are usually large, so bedrooms and whole upper floors will be left by the family and servants at dinner time. They are also in neighborhoods with little police protection. Expert jewel thieves travel with the seasons, spending the summer at places like Southampton, Newport and Bar Harbor, the autumn months in Asheville or Pinehurst, and the winter in Palm Beach or Miami.

No society reporter ever wrote as intimate a personal sketch of a social leader as is written mentally by the porch climber before stealing her



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

jewels. He knows when she dines, where the servants are at that hour, whether she is careless and extravagant, or careful and stingy—he is as keen about her habits as her French maid. When the right moment comes, he works quickly. With skeleton keys, he can open everything but a safe, and will often carry away a small safe containing valuables. It is his habit carefully to replace boxes that have held jewels, relocking drawers, trunks and closets, for this often leads to the passing of several days before losses are discovered, and gives him so much more valuable time for his getaway—even a few moments' delay may be precious while he is leaving the premises. I recall one case in which a woman living in an apartment house where others were robbed insisted that her jewels were safe, because she kept them in a locked drawer that nobody had been able to unlock for weeks. This was still locked—therefore her jewels must be safe. But, as it turned out, the thief had unlocked that drawer, taken the lady's jewels, and locked it again.

A record of the maker, case and works number of every watch should be carefully recorded.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Every article of jewelry should be photographed and described—whether insured or not. If it is stolen, these descriptions are invaluable to the police and detectives. They are also a great aid to the insurance companies.

Valuable jewelry should always be considered for its cash value. Would you, dear reader, put a thousand-dollar bill in a bureau drawer with a chance for some one to steal it? No, you would not! Then why so carelessly disregard the value of jewelry, and become the criminal's partner? There is almost as much criminal negligence by the citizen as there is crime by the criminal. Prevent crimes by preventing carelessness. Don't give any one a chance to steal from you. If the thief discovers that you are careful, he will rate you as a poor risk.

What becomes of all the stolen jewelry? The amount purloined by thieves each year must be astounding.

Generally, it is broken up, the gems are sold as loose stones, and the gold melted. It is purchased from the thieves, in many cases, by Uncle Sam, over the counters of his Assay officers. There is more than one curb market for the sale

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

and purchase of loose gems in New York City, and there are many dealers. It is virtually impossible to identify loose gems unless they are of notable size or extreme rarity.

The climber stalks his quarry alone, like the lion—I believe the lion hunts alone.

The pickpocket, however, hunts in a pack, like the wolf—or we might say the jackal.

Yet the pocket-picking “mob” or “troupe” is practically invisible, too, following this same instinct of the jungle—in plain sight, yet unseen by its victims.

Pickpocket camouflage is something like the queer striped effects that were painted on ships during the war to make them difficult targets for submarines. The pickpocket and his accomplices do not actually keep out of sight like the dinner worker, but conceal their real identity and purpose by taking the offensive against their victim, being quarrelsome and truculent, and so exciting him, and diverting his mind in desired directions, that he does not suspect their true nature until his loss is discovered afterwards—and sometimes not then.

One of the favorite targets of the pickpocket

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

has always been the fat man. A fat man is easily perturbed, and less likely than thin folks to feel his watch or pocketbook being removed. He rises like a fighting bull to the "stall's" jostling, and indignantly wants to know what he means. He enters with zest upon the argument that follows, and then, being a fat man, when he discovers his loss, his anger has evaporated. Where a thin, determined person would report his loss to the police, the fat man, even if he starts for the nearest police station, will stop after a block or two and say:

"Oh, well, how do I know I was robbed? Maybe I lost it."

A humorous device for arousing a fat man's anger—humorous, that is, to everybody else—is sticking a pin in some part of his person where he will instinctively put both hands. That uncovers his "front" and gives the half minute in which to deftly relieve him of his valuables.

The pickpocket or "dip" of a generation back usually specialized in people who, like the fat man, were easy marks—the half-tipsy citizen, the green countryman, the slow-witted, sluggish person, the born "boob." But to-day his art has



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

been so developed, principally through the cleverness of the "stalls" who divert suspicion, that the first class pickpocket does not hesitate to tackle anybody with valuables worthy of his attention.

The citizen who thinks himself far too intelligent or sophisticated to escape the pickpocket's attentions is more likely to lose valuables from the person than one who is frankly afraid of thieves—his own conceit will be used to help in his undoing.

A pocket-picking troupe usually consists of one first class pickpocket, or "tool," one or two "stalls," and sometimes an efficient female "booster." Such troupes are often routed over the country like theatrical companies, visiting fairs, conventions and other places where crowds gather, and the working conditions are most favorable. This criminal profession has been so systematized that now there are leaders corresponding to managers in the theatrical profession, who select from capable thieves the men or women to make up each outfit, pick the territory they are to work in, and supervise them like salesmen, so that each group will be stealing in

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

different sections of the country, and not encroaching upon other groups' territory.

The "tool" is nearly always of small stature, boyish in appearance, and expert in various degrees. In some instances a woman is the tool or dip—just as clever or skillful as a man. The pickpocket who steals watches and stickpins is looked upon as a bungler, and has no professional standing with the skillful. A real college graduate from the school of pocket-picking must be capable of taking "insiders"—that is, "leathers" or pocketbooks from inside vest pockets. Naturally, he would lift any hip-pocket leathers available.

The stall is always a person of large physique, disagreeable, uncouth, a disturber, using all kinds of subterfuges to give the pickpocket, or "jerver," an opportunity to rob the victim. He jostles the victim, treads on his toes, breathes the odor of onions in his face, bumps against him and disturbs his hat so that he has to lift both hands to adjust it. This is often done as though accidental. It is a great trick to get the victim's hands up. It is the same as having some one put your hat on for you. The owner must touch it

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

to make it set comfortably. Far from being sorry for these bad manners, the stall blames the victim. Only in extraordinary cases are the most violent methods resorted to.

Pickpockets don't steal from poor people. It is a waste of energy. They always select worthwhile victims. The stall, a good student of human nature, and a clever sizer-up of people, picks out the victim and figures on how he can be "got." What is apparently unintentional disturbance of the victim is always the the best plan. Bumping and jostling him in a crude clumsy way is best. There are hundreds of people who are not stalls for pickpockets, in no way connected with thieves, who are so awkward they are always annoying people. We have all come in contact with them. They leave doors open, walk in the wrong direction on the street, tread on people's feet—are just naturally obnoxious. This is the character the stall impersonates in a natural way, agitating the victim. Sometimes, when it is necessary to pull the rough stuff, an argument may ensue.

"What do you mean, you big stiff?" the victim demands, indignantly.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

“What do you mean yourself, you pot-bellied hick?” shouts the stall, coming closer, glaring into the victim’s face. “I’ll show you what I mean, you blankety-blankety-blank!” His language is obscene, and still further excites the hatred and combativeness of the poor devil who is about to lose his bank roll. “Blind rage” is a common term. Pickpockets literally blind their victim with his own rage, and the madder he grows, the more easy to rob him. The female booster sometimes works with the stall, or may herself be the stall for the pickpocket. She starts the argument by alleging that the victim has insulted or tried to flirt with her, the victim indignantly denies it, the stall takes her side, and in the twinkling of an eye it begins to look as though there would be a punching bout in what was a peaceful crowd just a moment ago. The woman insists, the victim defends himself, the stall suggests getting off the car, or going into a side street, as the case may be, to settle this thing, the woman crook cries that her heart won’t stand any more excitement, she is about to faint—and in the hullabaloo the dirty work is done.

I spoke of female “tools” or “dips”—pick-



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

pockets. They are not as numerous as the male—but more clever. People are always looking for the male grafter. It does not occur to them that a woman would be doing the work. The same applies to stalls. In most cases a woman is a better stall than a man—less likely to be suspected. Besides, a man will overlook what a woman does that is disagreeable, where he would argue with a man. Picking pockets is an exciting occupation. People who work at it are always quite intense. Every muscle in the body and face may be perfectly natural, but the eyes are tell-tale. Every pickpocket—male or female—will betray his or her work by the intense, alert expression of the eyes. No matter how adroit, Mr. Pickpocket always registers anxiety when making the touch.

There is a female type of pickpocket quite out of the ordinary—especially among attractive creoles and octoroons—who flirt with and inveigle old roués on prominent thoroughfares to accompany them to dark hallways, English basements, etc., and while pretending to permit undue familiarities, extract money from their pocketbooks, actually inserting in its stead tissue paper.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Many men "feel" they are not robbed if their pocketbooks have the same apparent thickness. If discovered, the victim does not complain to the police, because he would have to admit he was consorting with a woman of color. These good-looking colored girls have worked in all the large cities.

Careless men carry their pocketbooks in left-hand hip pockets, where they are easily stolen. Money carried in the inside coat pocket is not much safer, because thieves steal as easily from there. Valuables placed in the inside vest pocket and secured with a safety pin are harder to steal, but the deft "dip" will get them out with the assistance of a resourceful stall, sometimes cutting his way through from the outside.

The best plan is never to carry much money on your person. If you do, don't carry it in your hip or trousers pockets; because some day you are sure to lose it.

The stealing of watches, studs and pins by the pickpocket is decreasing—in fact, it seldom occurs any more. Various devices and tools, clip-pers, scissors and specially made cutters, are and have been used for cutting valuables out of cloth-

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

ing and taking out pockets. More watches were stolen when they were attached to chains and worn in the vests than since they are worn in pants fob pockets, which are usually buttoned shut.

A clever pickpocket working on the road with an expert female stall generally marries her, and she continues working, and if they have children they are trained in the profession—it is as much a matter of course as the doctor's sending his son to a school of medicine, or the lawyer's taking his son into his office.

When I have finished this part of my chapter the reader will know much about the inside workings of the pocket-picking game—the result of many years' experience with this class of crime. But it is not impossible that he may lose his own wallet to-morrow, even though he remembers all I have written, because these criminals are exceedingly resourceful in diverting people's attention from their valuables long enough to abstract them.

Clever new methods of stalling are the very life of the profession. While you are passing through a railroad station, for example, a poor

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Italian peddler's stock of balloons escapes his grip and soars to the ceiling. You are interested, amused, sympathize with the poor "dago," and perhaps join the crowd in helping him recapture the balloons. Everybody is looking up, some are pointing and reaching.

A pickpocket stall!

The Italian balloon man was paid by pickpockets to release his balloons for a diversion, and one or more "dips" are working on the uncovered "fronts" of people whose whole attention is concentrated upward. And the harvest, during the ten or fifteen minutes that the crowd enjoys the free show, will be plentiful.

In the old days of the grafting circus, it was common to hear the stentorian shout, raised in the crowd around the front entrance or side-show, "Look out for pickpockets! See that your watch and pocketbook are safe!" I have heard the conductor on a European train shout the same warning in several languages, and for the same purpose—to make people, by suggestion, feel for their valuables, and thus themselves point them out to pickpockets.

Before valuables can be stolen, they must be



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

located. Each pocket in a man's clothes has its thieves' term. Pockets in general are called "kicks." The right-hand trousers pocket is the "right britch kick," the inner pocket of the coat and vest are "insiders," and so forth. Valuables are sometimes located by rubbing up against the most likely pocket, feeling for wallet or watch. But the more valuable hauls are usually located by observation. People draw money at the bank and put it away in a certain pocket, or take their pocketbooks out to pay fares or purchase theater tickets. So clever have the most skillful pickpockets become nowadays that, instead of plucking a few "leathers" day by day, they will locate a victim carrying a large sum of money, or a package of jewels, and follow him until a favorable opportunity offers for a silent robbery. The quarry may be shadowed days, and even weeks, and the trail be followed thousands of miles, for actresses are especially good prey for this kind of theft, and many famous stars have lost jewelry to these gentry—and not stage jewelry for publicity purposes, either, believe me!

The watch fob is a gift to the thief. Safety

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

devices have prevented many a theft of both watches and stickpins. Most thieves look for watches in the right fob pocket. Wearing the watch in the left fob pocket is a preventive, but not a positive one. Keep out of crowds—known as “crushes”—and you are unlikely to get a touch of any kind.

What I have said about carelessness with jewels applies with equal force to pocket-picking. It is small comfort for the victim of these thieves to be told by police officers that his own thoughtlessness has been partly responsible for his loss, yet it is absolutely true, and the frequent advice given the public by police officials concerning valuables should be heeded and literally followed. Thoughtlessness in carrying large sums of money and valuables on the person makes the opportunity for pocket-picking, and is contributory thereto, setting up temptation. If people carried few valuables, the industry would languish, whereas to-day it thrives, because police officers cannot be on guard at every point in great cities, or the large gatherings where pickpockets are likely to operate—there are not enough of them in any city. It is only when losses multiply so

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

there are many complaints that systematic work can be done to apprehend and convict the thieves. Study your own habits for a day, note where you go, and how often it is necessary to reveal the place in which you carry your money, and probably give a pretty good idea of how much your bankroll contains, and you will realize how often you lay yourself open to the light-fingered gentry. Remember, that in the common everyday scene around you lurk these jungle folks, and be on your guard as though you were actually in the jungle, likely to be attacked by wild animals.

Women are generally easier victims than men. Having no pockets, they carry their money or jewels in handbags, easily opened and frequently laid down in public places while they are examining merchandise. Also, women are apt to be more thoughtless with money and valuables, probably because they do not handle them as a business, and have not learned how to make their purchases with a small amount of cash and a check book. Thus it often happens that Madame suddenly finds her handbag open on her arm and her purse gone. Uncertain as to whether she has been robbed or simply lost the

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

money accidentally, such thefts are seldom reported to the police.

Most of the thefts from women's handbags are committed in street cars, railroad trains, department stores, theater lobbies and other places where women congregate in crowds. And they are almost invariably the work of boy and girl beginners, pupils in this field of crime, undergoing instruction by trainers for "Fagins."

Oh, yes! Fagin is still with us, and always will be. In the thickly crowded sections of our larger cities, where pushcarts are numerous, young boys and girls begin minor street thieving from these carts in vacation time, and after they become adept, graduate to stealing watches from fob pockets. Their parents believe that they are on the street playing innocent games with other children in the neighborhood. It does not take very long for the novice to graduate into the high school of pocket-picking, and once he is capable his services are enlisted by older and more experienced thieves, and he acquires the higher learning of the profession.

For two reasons, the picking of pockets is alluring to many children. They discover an easy



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

way to make spending money when stinted at home, and the adventure of the thing appeals to active youngsters who find home life dull. Parents can prevent many children starting on this career of crime by making opportunities for them to earn spending money honestly, and making home life more congenial and interesting. Nowadays, boys and girls need more spending money than they did when I was a youngster, for there are more amusements and sports that require paid admission. When I was a kid we had no movies, few theatrical shows, and the circus once or twice a year. There were few professional baseball teams—we played the game ourselves. There were absolutely no sports connected with school life. To-day, young people have all these things, and they require spending money in moderation, and are a part of young folks' education and equipment for life.

Expert pocket-picking requires quickness, alertness and strength of fingers amounting to sleight of hand, which must be acquired by long and constant practice. Training develops such cleverness that the hand that does the work is practically invisible, even if it were not covered by

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

the distractions of the stall, or some other device, such as an overcoat thrown over the thief's working arm, a very effective method of concealment. A newspaper pushed under the victim's head is another effective cover. It may be held by a stall, or by the pickpocket himself, intently reading and apparently nearsighted, with his eyes close to the page, so absorbed that the newspaper is pushed onto the victim. That conceals the latter's "front"—he cannot see anything going on beneath the newspaper. If he speaks to the absorbed reader, the latter does not hear him.

Like most other professional criminals, the pickpocket is proud of his ability. He must have confidence in his own skill to be able to work at all. Indeed, the work is nerve-racking, and many pickpockets will be found laying off at health resorts for their nerves, Hot Springs, French Lick, Mount Clemens or some other place where they can play golf or tennis, have ocean bathing, exercise and sometimes medical treatment. Like the banker and business man, they need rest in preparation for the next season's arduous activities. The stall, on the other hand, who is a roughneck, does not appreciate

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

such genteel resorts, and does his rustivating in city poolrooms, or at the winter race tracks, or with frequent games of poker near his home.

While I have never been able to explain it to my own satisfaction, it is probably nervousness and strain that makes the pickpocket give a peculiar coughing or clicking noise as soon as the victim has been "touched" and relieved of his pocketbook or valuables. As nearly as the sound can be put into print it is a "Cl-x-x-x!" that says to his confederates, "I've got it—you needn't work any longer." This is also the signal for one of his accomplices to take the loot from the actual thief. For it is the latter who runs the greatest risk, and who will be chargeable with the real crime if caught, and given the longest sentence. The loot must not be found on him in the event of capture. If the victim discovers his loss before the troupe can get away, the pickpocket himself distracts attention from his confederates, and particularly the one who has the property. He pretends to assist in the chase, pointing out some other person instead of the one who has the valuables, or interferes in every possible way with the pursuit. In most

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

cases one of the stalls, helping the victim pursue an imaginary thief, is carrying the loot.

There is nothing more disconcerting to these criminal workers than quiet scrutiny by the victim they have attempted to anger, or of bystanders. When the victim does not rise to the red rag, they become suspicious of a trap, begin worrying, and as soon as possible quietly leave the scene, taking every precaution against arousing suspicion.

In the old days, picking pockets was one of the "privileges" with the traveling circus, like the shell game, thimble-rigging, three-card monte and crooked gambling devices generally, but to-day the big circuses carry special detectives to co-operate with local police officials, and keep pickpockets, not only off the circus lot, but off railroad stations, trains, street cars and other places where crowds gather when the circus is in town.

Pickpockets often follow important personages on their tours, mingling with the crowds that come to hear Lloyd George speak, the throngs that watch the passage of a president, a governor, a political candidate of prominence.

I was once called from New York to a west-



## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

ern city to accompany a presidential candidate addressing large crowds from the rear platform of his observation car, and who, while speaking, was so much annoyed by the boldness of pickpockets that his speeches were frequently interrupted. With the assistance of local officers we arrested nineteen thieves at one of his stopping places. Big amusement places such as the pleasure parks at summer resorts, theaters, moving-picture houses, boxing exhibitions and the like, are harvest fields for the sleight-of-hand grafter. The movie theater corridor is an especially good place to be on your watch, because the audience does not pass directly into the house as in an ordinary theater, but crowds around the entrance and lobby, waiting for the feature picture to end and the old audience to vacate the seats. The platform of railroad trains and street cars are good camping grounds for the pickpocket. While people with valuables are getting on to the train, the pickpocket troupe is getting off, making a great bustle, accidentally crushing hats, and so forth. I am sorry to say that in certain sections of the United States it is still possible to work under police protection—that is, before be-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

ginning work, the leader or manager of pocket-picking troupes confers with detectives and makes arrangements whereby, for financial consideration, they can operate unmolested. The old time "dip" who finances these criminal organizations knows exactly where the best pickings are in that line.

A certain percentage of the money stolen by pickpockets is held out by the director of the gang as "fall money," used for cash bail in the event of arrest on serious charges, and to engage attorneys for defense. Frequently, professional bondsmen are hired. Once or twice a week the leader of the troupe forwards to the director of his organization a part of the loot, especially watches and jewelry which cannot be easily disposed of except in large cities, along with a percentage of all cash stolen—this is the "fall money."

The extent of yearly thefts by pickpockets in the United States cannot be estimated. They are legion and ply their trade in every part of the United States where people gather in crowds.

One white girl who operated under these methods acquired a fortune at it. She always

## DINNER THIEF AND PICKPOCKET

posed as a stenographer or private secretary, was quite demure and modest. Once I met her on a steamer coming from Europe. Before dinner one evening she said she was going down to her stateroom to "light up." When she appeared at the captain's table she was bedecked with a fortune in precious jewels. Many a winter she spent at Palm Beach. Few people knew her real occupation. She was a California product, as pretty as a picture, and died quite young a few years ago.

Pickpockets seldom graduate into any other field of crime. Few save money, if any, because they are for the most part inveterate gamblers, and eventually take to narcotics to bolster up their nerves. The average pocket-picking career is not long, for this kind of crook is easily detected at work by the experienced detective, is photographed and fingerprinted, and becomes well known to the police. The ex-pickpocket frequently degenerates into a hanger-on in the wire-tapping game, a "capper" for confidence men, and an accomplice in sure-thing games of various kinds.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

**J**UST the other night a Brooklyn gentleman, going home in a taxi, had fifteen thousand dollars in a bundle on the seat beside him, when two men in another automobile ran alongside. They demanded the bundle, which contained funds for charity, collected at a public meeting.

"You don't want this money," he said. "It is charity money, and I don't think that even you fellows want to take money raised for the sick, the poor, the orphans and families of prisoners. Some of this money is intended for the widows, wives and children of men like you."

"How's that?" asked one of the highwaymen.

"I used to be the welfare worker in Auburn prison," said the Brooklyn gentleman. "Many times I have got money from prisoners to help other people, besides getting money from others to help get men out of prison. I am not armed."



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

I can't fight the two of you. If you want this money, take it."

"Oh, hell!" said the robber. "We can't take this money! Here is a little bit of our own to put in that bundle."

And handing him a ten-dollar bill, they sped away.

What would you do if a gunman suddenly poked an automatic in your face and commanded "Hands up!"

What would you do if you suddenly woke in the night and found a burglar in your bedroom?

The "stick-up" and the "proowler" figure prominently in the news these days—that being criminal slang for the bandit and burglar. If you watch the newspaper accounts of such crimes, along with the successful robberies and the cases where victims have also lost their lives, you will find episodes like this story of the Brooklyn gentleman, taken from a New York newspaper. To suddenly have a "gat" stuck into your ribs on a lonely street at night, or to glance up from your work in a bank teller's cage and find one looking you straight in the eye, is so unusual, sudden and terrifying an experience, that ninety-nine

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

persons in the hundred become speechless and helpless from fright. If the "stick-up" effects strong men in this way, it is hardly necessary to say anything about the terror of the woman who finally discovers a burglar under the bed, or wakes in the night to the knowledge that a grim presence, a prowling intruder, is in her sleeping room.

Yet these newspaper accounts of persons who do have presence of mind and knowledge of people (in this Brooklyn gentleman's case an intimate acquaintance with criminals) show exactly what ought to be done. The man or woman who will remember that criminals are only human beings, after all, and who can start a conversation with them, and keep up a running fire of talk directed towards a definite end, has practically a certainty of escaping without injury, and even fairly good chances of escaping with money as well.

"If I were told by a gunman to put my hands up," people are saying nowadays, with so many accounts of robberies in the newspapers, "I'd put them up, you bet!"

"Yes, and so would I," echo others. "And

## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

I'd put mine up a little bit higher than the rest!"

And so would I myself, Reader, because the criminal with a gun has the advantage for the time being. The right way to argue the question with him, if you want to argue, is to first do as he tells you, and argue afterwards.

"All right, son, I've got my hands up," you could say. "You've got the drop on me. I don't want to get shot. But, say! have a heart! I don't mind your taking my money and valuables, but don't take them in such a way that I'll be a nervous wreck all the rest of my life."

"I'll make a nervous wreck out of you, you big boob!" the gunman would probably say, and that might not sound very encouraging. Yet the more he talks back, and the tougher, the better things would really look, because "tough talk" is always a sign of embarrassment, not only in criminals, but in honest folks as well. By "tough talk" I do not mean the slang of people with little education, but a tone of gruffness and defiance. It may happen that a well-educated person, even a professor of English unaccustomed to the glitter and life of a big hotel or expensive restaurant, will "talk tough" by scolding

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

a waiter or bullying a bell-boy, because he is embarrassed and on the defensive.

Two-thirds of your battle is won if you can engage the criminal in conversation under such circumstances. I do not care how low or vicious a man may be, there is always something human in him, our common humanity. By a cleverly directed running fire of conversation, it is possible to touch that particular something, however slight or deeply buried. All people are reachable somewhere, and criminals are only people.

I don't suppose that Al Jennings, the famous reformed Oklahoma train robber, was frightened a couple of years ago when a New York "stick-up" robbed him on a city street, for he has had wide experience at both ends of a gun. But he was speechless. Knowing the advantage of the man with the gun, Jennings obeyed the order to hold up his hands, and then had nothing to say, with the result that he lost everything valuable upon his person, including pardon papers, as I understand it.

In one of those instances that escape the newspapers, not long ago, a contractor and his wife were walking through a lonely street. Two ban-



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

mits stepped out of a dark alley with the stern command, "Hands up!" Having handled men of all kinds and colors in many parts of the world on construction jobs, he was not taken aback, though of course he obeyed. "Don't be frightened, Jenny," he said to his wife. "These men are just people like the rest of us. Boys, let me step over to one side while you go through me—I want to say something to you privately." They allowed him to walk out of the woman's hearing, with hands up, when he explained that his wife was about to become a mother, and he was most concerned about frightening her. Though they took his valuables, the wife was unmolested, and she carried jewels in her handbag of far greater value than her husband's bank roll and watch.

The criminal is seldom "all there." You may be dealing with a person of weak will, and if your own coolness and determination are directed against it, you may command the situation. Can you imagine any bandit holding up a Napoleon or Roosevelt and getting away with their valuables? I have heard a story about Julius Cæsar once being captured by pirates.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

They decided to kill him, but Cæsar began talking, got their attention, was taken on board the pirate ship, began to advise them, and then give orders. Before long, he was threatening to hang the leaders if they didn't obey him, and according to the story he did hang some of those unfortunate pirates before they could get rid of him.

The "stick-up" is one of the very few criminals that you are likely to see while he is taking your property, for porch climbers, pickpockets and other specialists in thievery make all their plans to work undisturbed. But there is another gentleman of the underworld whom you may meet by accident. He is the "house prowler," a peculiar type of burglar, distinguished from the regular burglar and "yegg," because, in addition to taking your valuables, he enjoys the tense excitement of getting into your house, usually after midnight, moving around while you sleep, and making his selection at leisure. There are not more than fifty "prowlers" in the United States, so the chances of being introduced to one are relatively small. But if you should wake up and find a member of this select society paying his

## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

attentions to you, and can engage him in conversation, nine chances in ten, command of the situation will begin to swing over to your side. I know that most of my readers will think the suggestion fanciful, because only the exceptional man or woman is temperamentally capable of acting upon it. Unstrung and over-imaginative persons, unaccustomed to dealing with people, will be frightened and helpless, and had better cover up and keep quiet, and there is nothing to be ashamed of if they are built that way. But there are men who possess the necessary coolness, either as a birthright or through experience with people. Yes, and there are women, too, as any one may learn by following the news and noting instances in which the tables are turned upon criminals in various ways through their presence of mind and personality.

Both the prowler and the bandit are like wild beasts of the jungle, in that their greatest asset is ferocity and intimidation. The louder they roar, the more fearful is their prey.

An old animal trainer with the Barnum and Bailey, one who often went under the direction of the Haagenbacks from Hamburg, Germany,

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

with a crew of jungle hunters to Africa for wild animals, told me that the louder the voice, the quicker ferocious animals were captured, but that the slightest indication of fear by the captors would result in attempted attacks by the beasts and a stampede of the hunters. On the other hand, they were easily conquered, subdued and captured by courageous moves—louder growling and roaring than the animal's, determined advances, fearless expressions. The wild beast is first trained—if ever—by loud-voiced commands and steel-bar persuasion. A glistening revolver, with only blank cartridges, if you please, occasionally discharged at or near him tends to diminish his savagery. But he is never absolutely harmless.

So it is with the stick-up and house prowler. His general makeup at once frightens and alarms. Powerful and burly, masked, with a flashlight in one hand and a glistening revolver in the other, he requires no introduction or heralding in advance. He is a burglar to the whole family, from the kid in the crib to grandma in the spare room. The first impulse is to cover the body from head to foot and let the unwel-



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

come visitor take anything he finds lying around, tight or loose. Teeth chatter, there's many a chill, and a desire to give the marauder some extra special present besides what he steals, if he will only burgle quietly and leave without injuring any one. But remember, he is made up for his work. The mask, flashlight, pistol and other equipment are intimidations for him. Ninety per cent of the stick-up men and house prowlers to-day have not half the courage of their poor victims, if the latter only knew it. Nearly every criminal operating in this particular field is doped up with narcotics—a shot of “coke” or a sniff of “snow” before he tackles a job, or he may tank up on some of the present-day poison, called “hootch.” At any rate, he has to be nerved up and made up for his act or turn. Nine out of ten of these criminals are first water skunks—the rankest of cowards. Therefore, meeting a courageous person, man or woman, is their undoing. The greatest evidence of courage is presence of mind. The best evidence of presence of mind is engaging the stick-up or prowler in conversation. It gets his goat that his very glare and voice have not conquered.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Vain of his profession, he hates to be kidded or made little of. Like any other human being, once he loses his temper, he is on the toboggan decline, and sometimes more anxious to politely make his exit than the victim suspects.

The true prowler is as proud of making a clean getaway, if discovered, as he is of doing a slick job undetected. Flight and freedom are what he wants in an emergency, not a tussle or shooting, which mean alarm and probably the deadly crime of murder—at the least assault with intent to kill, which lengthens his prison sentence. This is always uppermost in the thought of every criminal—the possibility of capture and the punishment that will be meted out to him. The professional takes pride in doing his work so that capture will bring the lightest imprisonment.

Only a fool shoots in the commission of a crime. Max Shinburn, the king of safe burglars, who stole millions, told me he never shed a drop of blood in the commission of a single crime. Billy Coleman, the world's greatest heel man and bank sneak, who committed many marvelous crimes over a period of thirty-five years,

## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

never fired a shot, never shed a drop of blood but once, then in excitement, from his own person, by a terrific nose bleeding. The criminal who discharges firearms in his work hastens long imprisonment or execution. In many instances he is too cowardly to shoot.

During my Pinkerton days, one of our banks was robbed and one of our detectives killed by "yeggs," who had committed the crime in defiance as much as for loot. "Well, we got one of your banks, and one of your bulls!" they boasted. It took considerable work to get evidence pointing to a desperate yegg known as the "Missouri Kid." He was located with four other criminals in a Hartford house of ill-fame. The other four came out and were arrested, but the "Kid" stayed inside, at bay. I went in after him. He was in the parlor, with a forty-five calibre revolver pointed right at my face. I had a gun, but it was in my pocket, along with a new blackjack that a detective had given me that morning. I never carried a blackjack habitually.

"You wouldn't shoot, you blankety-blank-blank!" I said. "You haven't got the nerve!"

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

And he didn't. His hands dropped. I managed to get in and grapple, his gun slipped into a corner, and we battled. He was a much bigger fellow than myself, and younger. We broke a sofa, tipped over the stove, and finally I found myself on top, with his head pinned by my left arm. Reaching back with my right for my blackjack, I held it up so he could see.

"Look! Do you want me to raise peanuts on that skull of yours?"

He gave in quietly, and was turned over to a uniformed policeman who had been brought running by the noise and shrieking of alarmed females.

"My God!" he said to me afterwards, "I was all in the minute you came into the room. For you were all determination, and my nerve oozed out. I knew that you knew I wouldn't shoot!"

Buck Davis, who murdered the attorney for the General Electric Company at Schenectady, New York, pointed a revolver close up at me in the streets of Troy. I told him he hadn't the nerve to shoot. He didn't. I fought him to a finish, and arrested him. He committed suicide.



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

He held a revolver at the temple of a fine old Irishman, trying to force him to tell where he had his money hidden in the house.

"I'm an ould man, and might as well die now as any time. I dare you to shoot me. Ye haven't the nerve to do it!" he said. And Davis didn't. After Davis' arrest, the dear old Irishman and his wife gave Buck a fine thrashing in jail.

Reynolds Frosby, stick-up and murderer, narcotic addict, escaped from the Tombs. We learned that he was hiding in a Bronx apartment, and went there to get him. Every one warned us we'd be killed. He had all the gas jets closed with soap. When we entered the apartment it was in darkness. To strike a match meant making targets of ourselves. Frosby threatened to shoot—but he didn't. He had several murders on his soul, and didn't want any more. He is doing life at Dannemara, America's Siberian prison. He has escaped several times, is incorrigible, and has spent many a day in solitary confinement—a hard-boiled bad egg.

Wainwright, the smartest thief I ever met, and the only one who ever robbed a safety-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

deposit box, and whom I arrested for the celebrated three hundred thousand dollar Pinault robbery, was very handy with a gun. His mania was hiring many furnished rooms, which he filled with loot. With trunks full of valuable loot in four different rooms, he was constantly out on the streets of New York, sticking people up and robbing them. Burglary and stick-up robberies were a mania with him. He worked along Fifth Avenue between Fiftieth and Seventy-Second streets. Never wore a mask. The bigger the pistol, the easier the mark. He liked working near the Park, as it was a fine getaway. Every now and then, he told me, some victim battled with him, took his revolver from him, and trimmed him for all he had. It reminds me of Pat Rooney, who used to tell the story about going to Chinatown and being robbed. "But," he used to say, "it's a good thing I didn't have me revolver along. They'd a tuck that too." Wainwright's ancestors came over on the *Mayflower*. His grandfather was a Revolutionary general—there is a monument of him in a New England city. He was of wonderful stock. No members of his family were ever criminal,

## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

yet he developed into one of the most dangerous and daring criminals in America.

A reformed house prowler told me, a few years ago, that he once entered a house in a Pacific Coast city after 2 A.M. He had no idea whose house it was. He was masked, and carried a flash light and revolver.

“Stealthily ascending the stairs,” he said, “I came to the main bed room. A man and woman were in the bed asleep. I never saw two bigger people in one bed. The bed was of extraordinary size, and the two people looked like two cows covered up. Hanging on a chair near the side the man slept on I observed a coat and vest. When I started searching them I saw attached to the vest a glistening gold shield studded with diamonds. My curiosity got the better of me. The man turned in the bed. I thought I had awakened him. I remained silent for a long time. Finally I took the vest into an adjoining room. It was a diamond studded shield of the sheriff of the county. I could not resist taking it, and re-entered the room in search of more valuables. Hanging on the post of the woman’s side of the bed, I was attracted by the beauty of

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

a precious stone. I thought it was a necklace. Instead, it was a rosary. After I got out of the house I examined it. The sparkling stone I was attracted to in the bed room was a good-sized emerald. At first I could not believe it genuine. I went to Denver and showed it to a well-known receiver there, who told me it was worth four to five thousand dollars. He tried hard to get me to sell it to him. Told me I'd never have a day's luck if I kept it, because it was a rosary. I figured he would never have any more luck with it than I would, so I took it to Omaha. Every move I made turned out bad, so I sold it to a receiver there. After I sold it, I was caught in a prowling job, and got a stiff sentence for it. I blamed it on the rosary. The man I sold it to took it to Chicago to have the emerald put in another setting for his wife. There it was identified as a jewel stolen from the residence of a millionaire. My Omaha friend went to prison for it. While he was in prison, his wife died.

"How did that sheriff come by it, I wondered. Some thief in his jail must have given it for jail favors, I reasoned, because the sheriff had never



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

made a claim for it in Chicago. I liked the badge, and used it to good advantage for awhile to make 'plays,' but carrying it was dangerous, so I broke it up. In after years I met the sheriff I had robbed. He asked me to try to recover his shield for him, never suspecting I was the thief. But he never mentioned the rosary, and I never stole another one. The sheriff was such a fine fellow I was always sorry I could not have sent his shield back, but it was too late—it had then been cracked up."

Honor among thieves!

The prowler is a species by himself. He enjoys the fascination of his work. Entering a house stealthily and alone, he will take the most desperate chances for the excitement that it brings—something like the excitement for gambling inherent in other individuals. But he takes as much pride in a clean getaway as in undetected prowling.

All except a certain type of prowler known as the "Dutch horseman"—in this connection the word "Dutch" means German. These criminals have been known to commit murder when alarmed rather than make a clean getaway, evi-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

dence that they are far less skillful than the native house prowler.

Great apprehension was aroused in a New York millionaire's family some years ago when it was found, one morning, that the house had been entered and many valuables taken from different rooms. Circumstances led me to believe that it was the work of a "Dutch houseman," for articles had been taken with little discrimination, a small ship's compass along with a chronometer, and particularly articles that would be readily identified if sold, and which would be valueless unless sold intact. A little later one of these articles turned up in a Bronx pawn shop, and the robbery was traced to a German baker's boy who delivered bread to that mansion early in the morning. Finding the kitchen door open, he had entered and prowled all over the house, taking things indiscriminately, and pawning them because he was an amateur, and didn't know what else to do with them.

The timid woman who looks under the bed every night for a burglar is one of our classic jokes. She is not likely to find a prowler there, partly because that gentleman prefers to enter

## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

after midnight, and partly because, if he does enter earlier, he will wait until the lights go out and folks are in bed.

Instead of looking under the bed, let the lady take Bob Pinkerton's advice, if she is afraid of burglars, and spread a lot of newspapers around on the floor. Nothing will upset the house prowler quite as much as the slightest unusual noise. His victim may not hear it, but he does, and thinks every one else does too. The barking of a little dog, otherwise harmless, is good protection. Or let her remember that nothing stops a burglar as quick as light. It has been a standing rule, originated by the Pinkertons, to instruct all country banks to keep a bright light burning all night long in front of the vault or safe. To extinguish that light means an alarm. Some householders have their premises wired so the moment a window or door is touched at night the whole house is illuminated—a sure-fire burglar chaser. Burglar traps have been effective. A millionaire moving-picture magnate rigged up a real burglar trap on his Long Island estate. A burglar paid the place a visit, and it was his last call—the contrivance went off and

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

killed him. But the shortcoming of these devices is that they may kill innocent people. One of the most ingenious things of the kind I ever saw was a set of revolving cartridges inside a solid silver sugar bowl—a real tempter. To touch it meant instant discharge of the cartridges in every direction. But it exploded and killed an innocent person.

Let people have their jokes about the woman who looks under the bed for a burglar. How often do we read of some defenseless woman capturing single-handed in a house or apartment a so-called desperate burglar, daring him to kill her, and conquering. A thief is instinctively afraid to hurt a woman. If he fights a man, and the latter is given a black eye or knocked out, that's largely a sporting proposition. But if he strikes or disfigures a woman, there is no sympathy for him in court, and he is always thinking of his possible punishment.

Women often display surprising presence of mind in an emergency. Fire insurance adjusters tell me that many a blaze is put out in its beginning by a woman with presence of mind. There is a saying that a glass of water will put out



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

most fires the first minute, a pail of water the second minute, but after that you need the fire department. When the first minute blaze starts, a man often loses his head and yells "Fire!" or runs for the nearest fire alarm box, but there is a fighting instinct in a woman, inherited from days when she had to protect her young from every jungle danger, that leads her to grab the nearest thing at hand, a pail of water, a broom, and fly straight at the fire.

Women intercept far more thieves than men. They are more ready to use the telephone, and there are many more instances of women following criminals on the street until they can find a policeman and have them arrested. A woman will also grapple with a thief and scream. In the criminal, suddenly encountered, she sees a dangerous animal to be fought. Sometimes she will fight with superior coolness and courage, often taking command of the situation in the same way that women take command of men in other circumstances, regarding the male of the species as never anything but a grown-up boy. In other cases, even though women become hysterical, they will fight with more courage than the

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

average man, because women grieve over losses by theft more than men do, and will defend their possessions.

You can't fight a stick-up man who has the drop on you, nor the house prowler if he has you covered with a gun. You must obey. But there are very few instances where any one has been shot for engaging in conversation with them, and there are many cases where the victim has talked himself out of being robbed, especially by the bandit.

How many times have holdup men gone into banks, jewelry shops and stores demanding money or valuables, and been refused by courageous men who captured or assisted in the arrest of their threateners?

The bank clerk who suddenly finds a gun thrust between the bars of his grille, with a demand for money, can often shape the situation, if he has a cool head. He is surrounded with all sorts of devices for giving an alarm. If there are several of the bandits, it may not be possible to do much, but if there is only one, and the victim can start a conversation, there are very good chances of winning the battle. The very fact

## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

that he is not dismayed begins to worry the bandit. The latter's ferocious make-up doesn't intimidate the victim, and it is his turn to be scared.

"Well, I have often heard of you men," the clerk might say, "but this is the first time I've seen one of you. So you're in that line of business, hey? I can see by the way you got the drop on me you're an expert. They tell me you men often study a bank weeks beforehand to find out just the right day and the right time to do anything like this. But you've certainly hit it wrong here. I haven't got anything in the cage except big bills that would be identified the moment you put one in circulation. Now, if you'd been here yesterday, there was over fifty thousand dollars in payroll money—that would have been a fine haul."

There have been plenty of cases where bank men, defying the bandit have said, "You won't get it! Do your dirtiest!" and the bandit has walked out. But on the other hand, bank men have also been killed in faithfully protecting the money entrusted to them. What to do in such circumstances depends greatly upon one's judg-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

ment, coolness and nerve, and also greatly upon the type of thief.

There is far more chance of successfully defying an experienced professional than an amateur, as a recent robbery and murder of bank messengers in Brooklyn shows.

In this robbery, the first in that field of crime committed by criminals who had previously been professional automobile thieves, two bank messengers were shot down without parley, and a large sum of money obtained. But the criminals were quickly caught and convicted of murder. The killing was caused by fear on the part of the criminals, and a stampede, because the crime lacked the skillful stage management that a professional would have provided in advance. The courage of the robbers was in their guns. They were also bolstered up with narcotics. Brought to the critical moment, they saw that the bank messengers were not frightened, and also that they knew the criminals. In their panic, the latter shot to escape identification, but immediately began leaving clues like motor-car numbers as further evidence of their bungling. They were just plain make-believe bandits, and in the



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

test turned out to be eighteen-carat boobs.

He who is able to engage these criminals in conversation puts the bandit in the position of the man who caught the bear by the tail—all he had to do then was to find some way of letting go. The talking victim turns the criminal's whole thought to making his getaway as quickly as possible.

A gunman entered the office of a Los Angeles dentist and ordered him to put up his hands. The dentist obeyed, but at the same time coolly remarked:

"I'll bet you're the same fellow that held up the Ninth National Bank yesterday." This was purely a chance shot. But it landed right on the target. For that "stick-up" had been one of the gang that robbed the bank. He walked out of the office hurriedly, but the dentist followed and turned him over to a policeman. Chagrined at being caught while his partner in many other crimes went free, he gave information that led to the latter's arrest.

What with automobile getaways, and narcotics, and the automatic pistol, it is generally believed that banditry is a crime peculiar to our

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

day, and that property and life were safe from such crimes in the good old days.

Back in those good old days, a rather shabby saloon stood on the site of the present New York Times building, at Broadway and Forty-second street. It was way uptown in that day of horse cars, and had a watering trough under a sheet-iron awning. All the street-car horses were watered there, while the drivers and conductors went inside for schooners of beer, large foamy ones, sailed over the bar for a nickel. The place belonged to an Irishman who always had a fine big lump of corn-beef on the free-lunch counter, and loaves of bread, and a large butcher knife with which anybody was free to carve off as much as he pleased, whether he bought a drink or not.

One day this Irishman came to me in a great state of excitement.

“What in the hell is New York coming to?” he yelled. “Where are the police, anyway? Could you imagine, right here in bold daylight, a thief came in my saloon, stuck me up, and carried away my fine chunk of corned beef, bad cess to him.”

## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

Such was the New York bandit and our local "crime wave" in days of yore.

But what were the names of terror and lawless adventure in those very good old days, in the eighteen-nineties and eighteen-eighties? Why, Jesse James and his gang, and the Younger brothers, and the Dalton gang, and a dozen other bands of train and bank robbers, who thought little of murder. They worked along the western frontier, and it was a curious thing that many of them came from the state of Missouri, also that generally the bands were made up of brothers. During the Civil War, most of these bandits had been guerrilla fighters, and became heroes in their home communities for daring in ambushes, raids and murders. When they turned to banditry they were still heroes. A few earlier bandits had developed in the gold camps of the West, men failing to find gold or too lazy to work, robbing prospectors and stage coaches. A few earlier bandits also developed among the cowboys of the plains, the horse thief and cattle thief turning to holdup work. But in general, this wave of crime was the aftermath of the Civil War.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

I believe our present wave of banditry is connected with the World War in the same way. But that isn't saying that the bandits are ex-soldiers who have learned to fight and kill on the battlefield and turned their training to account in this field of crime. The present-day bandit isn't as good stuff as that at bottom, but rather a weak character whose respect for law and human life, if he ever had any, has been sapped by the stresses of the World War. Such courage as he has is artificial and temporary, taken out of a bottle or from a hypodermic needle.

Our massive crop of felons and malefactors must not be classed as the overflow of the World War. The birds of prey arrested these days are mostly youths 17 to 20, who were in short pants during the fighting. The seasoned criminal of the olden days, who had outlaw written all over his face, is seldom to be found. The present-day stick-up and all-round crook is the dapper fox-trotter with the brilliantined, sometimes marceled locks. He is a cross between mamma's boy and a mail-order tailor's model. He is the associate of the bootlegger and narcotic peddler, bold and resourceful—the sheik of the flapper. He totes



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

a flask—so does his girl—steals cars for joy rides, sticks up respectable citizens or robs banks. To certain abnormal types he is the hero of the hour. It is this hero worship in the motion pictures, on the stage, and so on, that inspires so many young men to deeds of violence and crime. Some of the flappers are as criminal as their heroes, though they more often evade arrest. There is a woman in nearly every case of sustained criminal intent. The youth of to-day has a record that it took the outcast of the past years to achieve. Drugs and dancing have succeeded the saloon; but a return to the saloon would make conditions worse.

The concealed weapon—I mean the revolver and pistol—are more responsible for serious crimes to-day than any other agent. They are the intimidation behind the coward and the criminal. In some states there are laws prohibiting the sale of firearms, but they do not prevent the criminals and gunmen from arming themselves because they readily buy in adjoining states or through mail-order houses. Seventy per cent of the homicides and major crimes are committed with firearms.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

I am the introducer of the fingerprint system of identification in America. Ten years ago, I advocated the fingerprinting of all foreign-born persons entering the United States. Our Government would not adopt the suggestion, fearing we might offend newcomers.

In Europe, in many countries, we Americans are required to furnish photographs, handwriting, and life history to various police departments. The Europeans are not afraid of offending us.

All emigrants should be carefully and thoroughly investigated in their native city or town before they are considered as prospective Americans. Some day we are all going to wake up and discover that our immigration laws are not strict enough. We need the honest, ambitious, thrifty immigrant; but the lazy, weak, criminally inclined should be kept from our shores.

In 1923 in a Pacific Coast city there were more murders committed than in Great Britain, and more holdups and burglaries than in all of France. This is what is now occurring in many large American cities.

The immigrant must be taught to respect our

## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

laws—to obey them. Many of the felons arrested to-day are of foreign birth or offsprings of foreigners, with criminal records in Europe before they came here. A study of the names of prisoners all over the United States will reveal this.

This is a very swift age we live in. With the moving picture and radio mind, sometimes I think it is all too fast for certain types. Mechanism is quicker—much quicker—than Man. It is sometimes all beyond his thinking capacity and general mentality.

I often wonder what will be occurring in criminal operations in 2024 A.D. Right now, it would be possible with a submarine for bandits or pirates to stick up an ocean liner—for instance the *Majestic* with the part payment of the British loan, seven or eight millions in gold. The submarine orders the loot brought to them in the ship's life boats. Refusal would mean sinking. It would take also a few clever criminals on ship board coöperating with those in the submarine. What could the liner do? Deliver or sink!

Or, we may have the "Catapult Limited"—

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

Earth to Mars in 60 hours—held up and surrounded with compressed air and robbed by bandits in all-steel airplanes. No firearms used, just chemicals. It can all happen if we progress in one hundred years as we have in the past forty.

The present-day bandit is more numerous, but so is the population. And so are the ways of catching bandits. Despite the daring and murderous raids that are being conducted in many of our large cities to-day, none of the criminals succeed in stretching out any such career as that of the James boys or other western bands two generations ago. There are no more bandits in proportion to the population—probably fewer in proportion to the temptation and opportunity. The present-day “stick-up” doesn’t have to seek the seclusion of the frontier and rob a railroad train—every town of any size at all has at least one bank with more loot, and in big cities hundreds of millions of dollars are being carried about, or lie around in money, jewels and securities.

The old border gangs were eventually rounded up and exterminated, and the present-day bandit will be, too. For two forces are working relent-



## STICK-UP AND HOUSE-PROWLER

lessly against him. One is the world's recovery from war stress, and a better state of the human mind, and the other is improved protective and police methods that will eventually outwit the bandit by cutting off his opportunities.

I have strongly advocated this year, to the International Association of Chiefs of Police at their annual convention in Montreal, a federal law prohibiting the manufacture and sale of revolvers and pistols which would diminish crime 70 per cent. in America.

In the United States in 1923, 10,000 persons were murdered or seriously wounded by revolver or pistol shots; 15,000 committed suicide; 28 murders a day are now being committed with firearms. Three presidents of the United States were assassinated with them. In London 22,000 policemen *do not* carry revolvers.

Who can object to this federal law? Enact it or make it an amendment to the Constitution and crime will be beaten to a frazzle; besides it would be a great eliminator of sorrow.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

“**H**ELLO! Hello there! Is this police Headquarters? Well, I am John Citizen, and my home has been robbed.”

“Yes, Mr. Citizen. Where do you live? We’ll send a detective right up.”

You are John Citizen, and you excitedly look over your ransacked drawers and closets, waiting for the detective’s arrival. Mentally, you picture and expect a big, burly, flat-footed “bull” of the kind made familiar by moving pictures, plays and detective mystery stories. I have no quarrel with the writers who use this standardized detective in pictures and drama. He is easily recognized by the audience or reader—everybody knows that he is a detective on sight. And he makes the right sort of foil for the clever, scientific amateur detective, who is going to out-guess him at every point. If he didn’t, there wouldn’t be any story or film—would there?

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

Finally your doorbell is rung by an undersized, quiet-spoken stranger who might be a delivery man or meter reader. He identifies himself as a member of the police force by exhibiting his shield, and begins an investigation of the burglary. He didn't look like a detective when you opened the door, and he doesn't act like one, now that he is inside. He is not only quiet in speech and manner, but uses no slang.

The burglary may be a small one—some cheap sneak thief has taken a few hundred dollars' worth of clothing and silverware, easily disposed of, but not very easy to trace or identify. The detective writes down as good a description as you can give him, and goes away, frankly telling you that the principal chance of recovery in such a case will be in the arrest of a thief in some other robbery and the finding of your property. Incidentally, he examines the broken lock, and perhaps gives you a word or two of advice about windows or other entrances to your premises that invite the sneak thief.

If your loss is considerable, involving jewels, furs, family plate and other property more easily traced, he will look for fingerprints and

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

other evidence connecting the crime with a known criminal, or with some crook not in the rogues' gallery who may be apprehended later.

Some weeks later, or even months, after you have given up hope of results, and come to the conclusion that the police have forgotten your case, this detective reappears and asks you to visit police headquarters and see if you can identify any of your property in a lot of loot that has been recovered in the arrest of a gang of thieves.

John Citizen wonders how this is all done. It is a system with a capital S, the details of which will appear later herein.

In police departments, in most instances, detectives are selected from the ranks on account of their fitness for the work. Usually the patrolman with a number of creditable arrests is most suitable, because he has shown alertness in the detection of crimes and sound judgment in the preparation of evidence against his prisoners. Also, his contact with complainants, frequent court attendance, familiarity with procedure and association with detectives already in the service, strongly incline him to a desire to engage in this class of police work. This type of bright police-



## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

man is always "found" and eventually detailed to the detective division. Attendance and instruction in the school for detectives, real department experience, contact with other and more experienced members of the detective division, have much to do with his success.

I find in my study of detective departments that the central bureau and district systems are most in vogue; New York, London, Paris, Berlin and many European cities have them—a commissioner and chief of detectives at police Headquarters, an inspector or captain with a squad of detectives in each precinct or division, and an inspector or superintendent in charge of a number of precincts, all responsible and reporting to Headquarters. In the chiefs' squads are specialists in the investigation of homicides, safe and loft burglaries, holdups, and the more serious crimes.

The argument in favor of precinct bureaus is that they form local detective bureaus, where the detectives familiarize themselves with every resident, and every irregular inhabitant, and work up special sources of information about the resorts of undesirables, etc. When they have a

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

crime beyond their ability, the aid of specialists from headquarters is enlisted.

The detective's calling is one that calls for quick-witted judgment. Many a time I have watched the actions and listened to the prattle of detectives as portrayed on the stage, and wondered what the author or actor would do if either of them came in contact with a real detective of this age. The stage sleuth is usually an ass, while the actual product is a credit to his profession. Like all callings, there are some boneheads, but the majority make good, and very good at that.

A successful detective should possess most of the following qualifications:

A knowledge of human nature, in order to know what persons are likely to do; an interest in psychology, in order to know why persons act and feel and think as they do; knowledge of the elements that constitute such crime under investigation, as well as the evidence that must be obtained; ordinary intelligence and common sense; a keen power of observation; ability to practice deception; ability to gain and hold confidence; resourcefulness, persistence, and tireless

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

capacity for work; a suspicious nature; an acquaintance with the kind of business, as well as with the persons who are employed, who live in, or who frequent the section to which he is assigned; ability to question so as to get information; knowing by sight persons who are likely to be the subject of police search.

With all these must go the element of luck.

When I was a very young detective, having been in the Pinkerton organization only a few months, I went back to the old home town, expecting to awe the folks. My sense of importance over being a really truly detective was so strong that, instead of being over-awed, my relatives ridiculed me, and finally proposed a test to see what sort of detective I was.

They brought out about a dozen photographs of little children, all girls, and all my cousins, so there was a strong resemblance between them.

"If you're such a wonderful detective," they said, "just pick out the picture of your sister when she was a little girl."

That put me on my mettle. While examining the photographs I began to think, and suddenly got a hunch. Suppose they had set a trap for

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

me, and my sister's picture was not among the photographs at all? I strongly suspected some such deception, and was ready to declare that her picture was not there—but how could I prove it?

I went over the photographs several times, while the skeptical relatives watched me, enjoying what seemed to be my embarrassment.

"Her picture isn't there!" I finally announced.

"That's right—but how did you know?"

"Why, all these little girls are wearing earrings, and my sister's ears were never pierced." In those days screw earrings were unknown, and the very fact that any girl wore earrings was proof that her ears were pierced.

The detective should possess unfailing courage, excellent eyesight, have a good memory, be even tempered and refrain from discussing his work or any part of it with any one except when actually necessary. He should be a good reader of human nature, not too quick to arrive at conclusions, and always giving the suspected or accused the benefit of any reasonable doubt. He should treat others as he would expect to be treated, and remember that the law is made for



## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

every human being, innocent and guilty alike. His conclusions should be based upon facts—imagination, thoughts, beliefs, theories, etc., are not evidence, and are never received as evidence against the defendant. The conscientious detective will soon learn that there are grave dangers of injustice in his work, and will be slow to make accusations until guilt has been proven beyond a doubt.

I was once called to a New England city where a burglary had been committed in the office of a factory, a large sum of money being obtained from the safe and a night watchman shot. The latter was at the point of death, and unable to give any information.

At the railroad station the chief of the local detective force met me.

“Well, Dougherty, it was a waste of time to bring you up here, for we know who did that job.”

He was certain that the factory engineer had done it, and asked me to look into the engine room where the latter was working. The engineer had been arrested, but his employers thought so well of him that they had put up

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

thirty-five thousand dollars bail for his release. I got a good look, and recognized the man as a former criminal. But I did not tell the local detective so, saying instead that he somewhat resembled some one I had seen before, but I could not be certain.

That night, after he had gone home, I visited the engineer's house, a comfortable cottage, with a pleasant wife and a couple of children. He was greatly upset by my visit, but I asked him to talk things over. He admitted his criminal record, but said he had reformed, and that nothing would induce him to commit another crime.

"Why, I get one hundred twenty dollars a month at the factory, and like the work, and am so happy here in my home, making an honest living, that I'd be a fool to do anything like that."

There was no doubt of his sincerity, and I not only believed him innocent, but resolved to help him prove it. Before his case came to trial, the night watchman recovered sufficiently to talk, said that the engineer was innocent, and that the job had been done by several strangers, and a little later a gang of professional "yeggs," ar-

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

rested in another part of the country, admitted guilt for that burglary and freed the engineer.

Many teachers of detectives, and self-made men in the profession, believe that the detective should be a specialist in every line—that is, able to analyze any and everything. This is all unnecessary because, by application to a specialist, a comprehensive and much more satisfactory analysis can always be procured.

Conjecture, deduction, a certain amount of analyzation, etc., are quite necessary in the detective's vocabulary of knowledge and effort, but he must always realize they are not facts. I know many men at the top of the ladder of fame to-day who began in the business as novices, and who acquired all they know from experience and close conscientious study, careful application to their work. But situations, real daily occurrences, coming up in the lives of detectives, do more to fit them for their work than all else.

The detective appointed through political influence becomes an important factor in his police department, is a friend of the mayor, the political leader or the chief, and Johnny So-and-So insists upon his appointment. Every one in

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

the department knows why he is promoted. Whether he makes good or not, matters nothing—he is taken care of by his party. But the favoritism has a deterrent effect on the force.

It is strange how a law sometimes enacted for political purposes reacts as a benefit to the people. In New York State, a few years ago, a law was enacted authorizing the commissioner of police of New York City to promote any one hundred and fifty patrolmen selected by him to be detectives of the first grade with an increase of about one thousand dollars a year in salary. They were to be promoted and demoted at will.

Every friend of a powerful politician in the police department who was a patrolman was promoted. In those days he did not have to do much detecting, but attended roll call and the line-up of prisoners, listened to a few details read, and spent the afternoon on the race tracks or at baseball parks, and the evenings in the theaters. He was always looking for dangerous crooks, and though he never found any, was a terror to them—so he claimed. Every time he appeared in sight, they hustled back to their holes and stayed there—to hear him tell it.



## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

But this law, in honest hands, turned out to be an excellent one. It became a goal for the patrolman. If he made an exceptionally meritorious, courageous arrest, he had a chance of being promoted to the detective division, and made a first grade detective, with an increase of one thousand dollars a year in his salary. If he made good, he remained, if he failed, he was demoted and made room for the next in line.

Naturally, when selecting recruits for this branch of service, men of honesty, intelligence, tact, ability, sobriety, good judgment, common sense, and indefatigable ambition, and persistent workers are preferable.

A fugitive from justice wanted by the police in an American city is reported to be living at 314 Brixton Road, London. A detective in Scotland Yard, London (a C.I.D. man, or Criminal Investigation Department detective) accompanies an American plain clothes officer to a local police station, where Police Constable 6428 is called in from "point duty."

"Whittaker, who lives at 314 Brixton Road?" his sergeant asks.

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

P. C. 6428 produces an oil-cloth-covered note book.

"The house belongs to so-and-so," he reports. "It has been occupied by two different tenants this year. So-and-so moved out March 15th, and so-and-so moved in March 20th. There are five persons in the family, a man, a woman and three children. They brought five trunks and a quantity of hand luggage. They are Americans, and would appear to be from the interior of the United States. It does not appear that the man has any occupation, though servants and tradesmen report that they have ample funds, and spend their money liberally."

Police Constable 6428 gives a lot of other correct information, knows the name of the dray owner who moved them in, what railroad station they were brought from, can furnish the initials on the luggage, also hotel names on any trunk pasters. In this case, he says, two of the trunks had labels of the Baltimore Hotel, Kansas City, Missouri and the Blackstone Hotel, Chicago; they arrived at Southampton on the *Majestic*. He can tell you just as much about any other premises on his post.

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

The same condition exists in every police district in the city of London and, in fact, in all of the larger cities of Great Britain. Unless it is a case requiring the utmost secrecy, the detective from the Criminal Investigation Department of New Scotland Yard invariably consults with the policeman on post and his associates before commencing an investigation of a crime.

In Continental countries, the police authorities would already have such information on their books, because the traveler is required to make out a police information blank at the same time he registers in a hotel, giving his name, age, residence and the like. Every resident of the country must likewise be registered. The people in such countries are used to it, and not only take it as a matter of course, but find certain advantages in the system. In some countries, for example, the police will register a citizen for a small fee and give him an identification card bearing his photograph, fingerprints and signature, which is official proof of his identity, a sort of domestic passport that enables him to prove that he is himself under any circumstances. Moreover, in cases of forgery or doubtful signa-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

tures, his genuine signature is on file with the police, and that official signature constitutes court proof of genuineness or forgery.

In Paris, the detective department, while a part of the police force, is distinctly separated from it. Its headquarters are in the Palace of Justice, presided over by a commissioner and a chief. Each district has a commissioner who is the chief investigator of all crimes in his territory. No Paris detective ever served as a policeman. He is not acceptable for detective duty if he is over five feet seven inches in height and weighs over one hundred fifty pounds. Their idea is not to have detectives who look the part. Most of their work is done secretly. Many squads of men made up as ordinary workmen frequent on motor cycles the outlying residential sections at night, while the hotel, theatrical, restaurant, café and business district is frequented by squads dressed to suit the occasion.

However, this systematic way of keeping track of people, while of the greatest value in detecting crime and running down criminals abroad, would never work in the United States. Public opinion is against such surveillance.



## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

Also, our cosmopolitan population would make it very difficult to operate such a system. On that account, American police work of the same kind is done through the "mixer" type of detective, who is a human register of people likely to be of importance to the police, and at the same time wastes no effort in registering people not likely to be important. Such information is gathered, not only by the "flat-foot" detective, but by the unassuming clerk-like operatives, and also plain clothes men of foreign birth or lineage working among people of their own race. The chief qualifications are a wide acquaintance, particularly among those who follow the life and movements of a neighborhood, and a retentive memory for names, faces and so forth. The furniture van driver and the expressman know when people move, or go on trips, or arrive in the neighborhood as strangers. The laundryman, the milkman and the little Jew who presses trousers know who has gone away, and who came recently, as well as who has lived long in the neighborhood.

In many of the larger cities of the United States there is the favorite or popular detective

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

of the precinct or district to whom information is imparted by friends in both the under and over world in preference to any other person in the territory, because "he is one of the neighbor's children," and in the days when he was a patrolman in uniform, was always decent and ready to do a good turn—the favorite cop of the whole neighborhood. When he was promoted to be a detective, and assigned to duty in this district, every man, woman and child who was on the square—and a good many who were not on the square—felt it their business to help Dan climb to the top of the ladder of fame, which they could best do by imparting information to him about those who were concerned in crime.

He is the type of policeman who is referred to as a "bull," or plain clothes man, rather than as a detective who sometimes through political influence, but also through detective ability, was promoted to the detective bureau—a good "mixer" who kept track of people, collected all sorts of information, and made many important arrests. His training as a detective did not include teaching in a school for detectives, but what he gained from his contact with the public,

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

by his good nature, decent acts and constant practice. He is the self-made police detective, and sometimes a very good one.

While I was in the New York police department as chief of detectives, I frequently came in contact with this type. A reprehensible, horrible murder would be reported. The homicide squad and every available school-trained detective in the department would be pressed into service in the effort to determine who was the perpetrator of the crime. The newspapers would be blazing with headlines, criticizing the inefficiency of the detective division, and the police department in general, when this type of supposed know-nothing detective would timidly request an interview with me through one of my uniformed attendants.

“Commissioner, I hope you will pardon my intrusion, but I know just at this minute the department is sorely in need of information about the Hell’s Kitchen murder. I came here to see you, give you the name of the man who committed the murder, tell why he committed it, and where he is now hiding. I also have the names of two good witnesses, and know where some of

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

the stolen money is hidden. But I don't care to have it known that I gave the information, because it would interfere with my work in the district, and the perpetrator and his friends might figure out who gave the information to me, which would be putting somebody in bad."

Here is a type of detective who throws honorable mention and public praise to the four winds, and who is more useful in critical times, when alleged "crime waves" are prevalent, than one hundred astute investigators, because open investigation, no matter how intelligently made, might not reveal the intimate information furnished by this so called "bonehead" detective, who is as much a necessity in the investigation of crime as the Sherlock Holmes of to-day.

The tendency to eliminate the gum-shoe, flat-footed, pot-bellied bonehead detective from the police departments in the larger cities of the United States, is becoming more and more noticeable, while the younger, more intelligent and athletic individual is being pressed into service.

In all the large American cities it is necessary to press into service as detectives men of every possible nationality. In my time in the detective



## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

bureau of New York City there were a number of members who spoke Japanese and Chinese. There is to-day practically every nationality in this bureau, including a number of colored men.

The centralization of crime investigation by experts, assigned to special squads for the purpose, acting under the direct command of the inspector of the detective division, is preferable. The New York police department's homicide squad, for instance, carefully trained in the investigation of murders, can much more carefully and thoroughly inquire into these crimes than those unfamiliar with them. There are also the safe and loft squad, the pickpocket squad and bomb squad, whose duty it is also to familiarize themselves with the radical element. There is also the bureau of missing persons, presided over by a captain with twenty-seven men in his command. This bureau, by systematic methods and concentration, performs very wonderful service.

In many of the large American cities there are police specialists who familiarize themselves with the operations of professional criminals, especially safe burglars, forgers, bank sneak thieves, pickpockets and high-class confidence

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

men. There is always considerable exchanging of information on these subjects between the specialists and experts of different cities. A number of the younger men in the detective bureau are gradually being trained in the art of observation and shadowing. They are also being taught contact—part-playing—commonly known as “roping.” These detectives are more or less referred to as the “secret men” of the department.

A part of the education of the detective in a city like New York is having him attend “the line up,” an exhibition of criminals at police headquarters each morning, to acquaint himself with them, their appearance, voice and general mannerisms. The criminal record of each prisoner exhibited is read by the inspector in command. The prisoner is required to walk and is shown from every angle. The seven hundred detectives who appear at this line up are all masked, that the prisoners exhibited may not know them. When the identity is unknown, a request for identification is made by the inspector in charge of the detectives attending, so if any one of the seven hundred men knows anything about the

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

prisoner, he indicates it by raising his right hand, comes forward, and relates what he knows.

When I entered the police department as a deputy commissioner and chief of the detective division, I came in contact with a patrolman in uniform named Peter Purtell, at the city morgue, whose duty it was to search the bodies of all unknown persons for clues that might result in their identification. The outside public haven't the slightest idea how many bodies are brought to the morgue in New York City from the rivers, many of them drowned months before their discovery. It was a part of Patrolman Purtell's duty to undress these dead bodies and endeavor by a system of careful searching for tatoo or other identifying marks on the body, in the clothing, shoes or hat, to find some mark or information which might result in the identification of the deceased. I studied this man, and found that he was quite interested in his work, and in a crude sort of way, without any definite instructions, made fairly good records of what he found. The missing person bureau at that time was practically in its infancy. I had Purtell promoted, with an additional one thousand dol-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

lars a year for his very disagreeable though careful work, and we began a systematic method of conducting this bureau by finger-printing all the unidentified dead, taking Bertillon measurements of them where it was possible, and making more careful search for identification than ever before. An important factor in this work is a collection of laundry marks, which were furnished to us by every laundry in the metropolitan district, and subsequently classified. When we found a laundry mark on any part of the clothing of the deceased, by comparison with the records of laundry marks we were frequently able to identify the body. All unidentified bodies sent to the morgue, if not eventually identified are buried in Potter's field. But after this systematic way of handling cases of this kind, the number of bodies sent there greatly diminished.

The present Police Commissioner of New York City, Hon. Richard E. Enright, is responsible for the school of detectives. His subordinate officials are ever on the alert for new material for this school. Officials and members of the police department particularly expert in the investigation of crime, lecture before the classes,



## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

as well as representatives of the district attorney's office and the bench, professional handwriting and experts in psychology, mental defectives and morons, mental diseases, pathology, criminal injuries, chemistry and microscopy in detective work, physical training, pistol practice and field work. I am a member of the faculty of this school. Each class consists of about one hundred men. They are taught, and carefully so, every branch of criminal investigation. As will be noted, the candidate for patrolman before entering the police department receives a very thorough training, and by the time he graduates from the school for detectives, with any aptitude at all, should succeed.

My mail includes a couple of hundred letters monthly from young men in all parts of the country, seeking positions as detectives, or asking how such positions can be secured. To any one accustomed to studying handwriting, these very letters show that the correspondents are unfit for the calling they aspire to.

Generally, they begin by reading detective stories or seeing detective films. That creates the desire to figure as a hero. Maybe a cor-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

respondence course in detective work is taken, the pupil gets a diploma, and is ready to begin practicing the profession he thinks he has mastered. But now he is up against the problem of making a living at it. In at least forty-five states it is illegal to practice as a detective without a license. If he got a license, where would he get a clientele?

No man is fitted to become a detective unless he finds the work fascinating in itself. An absorbing interest in one's work is the chief element to success in any line. In detective work, the desire to detect is the greatest asset.

Suppose you, Mr. Reader, have this great interest in the work, and feel that you measure up to most of the mental and physical qualifications that I have set forth in this article. Let me suggest a way in which you may become a detective:

Begin as a "harness bull"—a young uniformed cop on the police force of a large city.

There is a great difference in the general appearance of the uniformed policeman to-day, compared with yesterday, in most of the large American cities, because in selecting candidates the old-time method of seeking applicants over

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

six feet tall and weighing two hundred pounds or more has been abolished. While this type of policeman of commanding appearance is effective, especially in traffic, he is sometimes so cumbersome that he interferes with his own progress in the pursuit of the fleeing criminal.

Applicants applying to the Civil Service Bureau of New York City must be, on the day they are placed on the eligible list, less than twenty-nine years old, five feet seven and a half inches in height, one hundred thirty-eight pounds or over in weight. For instruction in the police department, the candidate attends the New York Police training school for a period of ninety days, where the physical training by expert instructors consists of calisthenics, humane handling of prisoners by jujutsu, boxing, school of the soldier, squad and company, manual of arms and climbing fire escape ladders, bottom rung ten feet from the ground.

The mental instruction and training consists of deportment, patrol, observation, crime classification, arrest, traffic, handling of animals, fires and accidents, ordinances, disorderly conduct, felonies and misdemeanor, assaults and danger-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

ous weapons, homicide, larceny and robbery, burglary, handling children, court procedure, reports, election law, malicious mischief, public morals, the Sabbath law.

While the candidate over five feet seven and a half inches in height, the ponderous type, is eligible for admission to the department, the present general tendency is to accept the athlete in preference.

When you put on your uniform and go out to patrol a beat, begin by observing. The ability to observe and remember what you have seen is the very foundation of detective work. It is said that Houdin, the great French magician, taught his son observation by taking him through the Paris streets, past shop windows full of the most miscellaneous articles. And to appreciate this story you must know that shopkeepers on the other side usually put most of their stock in the window—when you step into the store it is bare. The elder Houdin would say, “Attention! Observe!” as they passed a certain shop. It might be a jeweler’s, a milliner’s, a druggist’s. They walked past at an ordinary pace, and then the son was asked how many things he saw. By



## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

this training in observation he soon became so skillful that, with one glance at a shop window containing fifty or one hundred different articles, he could enumerate and describe them all.

The uniformed policeman cannot do plain clothes work in his off hours—that violates the rules of the force, even if he had time for it after his long stretches of patrol and reserve duty. But he can keep his eyes open while working, and train himself in observation. Let him learn to observe people, and train his memory in faces, gaits, mannerisms, peculiarities and other characteristics by which people can be recognized from description, or described to others. Right on his beat, around the corner grocery or in the neighborhood cigar store, he will find individuals about whom it should be his business to speculate. Why do they loaf while other people are working? How do they live? How long have they been in the neighborhood? Why do they disappear at times and turn up later, suddenly prosperous? He can get his first training by discussing such people with the plain clothes men in his precinct. Formerly, there was a spirit of

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

superiority among plain clothes men toward the uniformed officer ambitious to work his way up, a feeling of "Why should I make this boob wise?" But this is disappearing, and the capable plain clothes man knows that the ambitious youngster in uniform can often help him in ways that redound to his own credit.

Detectives are not born—they are made. And the three things that make them are teaching, experience and proficiency attained by practicing what they have learned.

And work! When he does achieve his ambition, and is promoted to the executive force, there will be plenty of detecting to do, for most American cities are under-policed, and the cop knows no union hours. If he has the desire to detect, however, the interest in his cases will make him go through with them regardless of the plot.

I once spent three days and most of the three nights in running down a bank swindler, tracing him from one place to another, talking with many different persons, and picking up evidence. Late on the afternoon of the third day I located him at an uptown boarding house. He had

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

lived there, but had moved to another domicile. It was a rotten night, and I was all tired out, hungry and wet.

"One thing is certain," I thought, "that fellow won't move a night like this." Instantly something inside me said, "Now that you've gone so far, why not finish up this job to-night?" Weariness and hunger were forgotten. Procuring a police officer to make the arrest, I went to the swindler's new boarding place, and found him just stepping into a hack to leave for parts unknown.

With these qualifications, and good training, and experience, the professional detective produces results quite as astonishing as those of the amateur sleuth in the detective story.

A man reported the loss of his watch in the washroom of a hotel, saying that he had hung up his coat and vest while washing, and found them gone when he turned around. A city detective accompanied him to the hotel and questioned the negro porter, who disclaimed all knowledge of the theft, and said he did not remember seeing the victim come in. Turning from the negro, the detective began an examina-

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

tion, and presently lifted a window and found the watch outside on the sill. Still the negro protested innocence. Whereupon the detective took a newspaper, dropped some cigar ashes on it, and told the porter to put his right thumb and fingers into the ashes and then on the paper, making a very good fingerprint. Lifting the watch, he showed the negro the same fingerprints upon its polished case.

“Well, boss, it certainly does look as though I must have had it in my hand!” was the thief’s acknowledgment.

Purely a piece of deduction made by knowledge of people and their habits.

In another case a detective was called in by the officers of a bank that had suffered a heavy loss through forgery. The money had been obtained upon a fraudulently certified check. One of the officers thought it a case for a handwriting expert, who might be able to identify the criminal, probably a professional, and on record in police archives.

“I think he can be located in another way,” declared the detective, after examining the false check.



## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

"What would you do?" he was asked by the bank's president.

"Find the man who made the rubber certification stamp," was the answer. Several plain clothes men were sent out to make inquiries of rubber stamp makers, and in a few hours found the man who had made this one. He proved non-communicative at first, maintaining that transactions with his customers were confidential, but by tactfulness and strong arguments on the other side, the detective finally got, not only a good description of the customer, but a sketch he had made for the guidance of the stamp maker.

"This isn't like the stamp which was used," commented the detective, after examination of the sketch.

"No, it isn't," admitted the stamp maker, who by this time was loosening up. "He told me it wouldn't do, and brought in a certified check to be followed in making another."

"Have you got that check?"

"Yes, here it is," said the stamp maker, producing a genuine check with a genuine certification. The signature had been torn off, but the

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

detective made out the letters "es & St." It now became necessary to find the firm in the business directory with a name fitting these letters. As the forged check had borne the false signature of a brokerage firm, he soon located a "Stinnes & Stinnes" among the brokers, visited them, found that the check left with the stamp maker was one of their own, and discovered the forger in one of their messengers who, taking checks to the bank, had used the name of another brokerage house to effect the swindle.

Again a straight piece of deduction, aided by the sheer foot work that is necessary in the work of a city detective.

In one of my own cases, a forgery had been committed in a western state, and a clergyman arrested under suspicious circumstances. The forged document was brought to me for examination.

"Don't tell me any of the circumstances," I requested. "Let me work on the document alone."

After noting several details, I was able to name the criminal who had done the job, freeing an innocent man.

## MEET THE REAL CITY DETECTIVE

Telepathy? Second sight? Crystal-gazing?

No—not even a piece of Sherlock Holmes deduction, but a bit of luck, mixed with experience and a good memory. Some years before I had cross-examined a forger who was so vain of his ability that, in my presence, he had executed several false signatures of different types as a demonstration. Knowledge of handwriting revealed that this was his work.

The detective is a hero—in books. But in private life criminals are far more popular as heroes, and while the detective may occasionally get public credit for an outstanding piece of work, generally his chief reward from day to day is in the satisfaction of work well done, duties faithfully performed, and not too well paid for compared with other vocations that require the same training, and underpaid when the risk and responsibility are taken into consideration.

Speaking of rewards, it was a rule in the Pinkerton organization that no operative could accept money offered for the capture or conviction of criminals, even though his work entitled him to it.

I've always been a great believer in keeping

## THE CRIMINAL AS A HUMAN BEING

the crime investigator in the heroic class. He should not be detailed to procure evidence about vice, gambling, bootlegging, speak easies and violation of the eighteenth amendment. This character of work should be done by special organized squads independent of the detective division. Like all other professions, the detective who is most infatuated with his work is always the most successful, and he is especially interested in the investigation of crime, but very much discouraged if detailed to duty outside this line, where he is not really protecting the public against the criminal and dangerous elements, but enforcing laws for which our police forces were never intended, and have not the numerical strength. He may not be a hero to the newspaper reporter, scenario writer or novelist, but he can be a hero to himself, and associates who know work well done, duty faithfully performed. And a very large part of his efficiency is in keeping him a hero in his own esteem. (1)

THE END

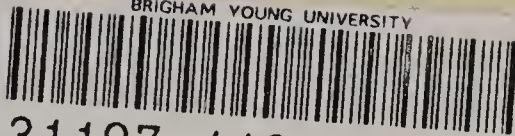




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